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THE SOCRATES BOOKLETS: III

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BEN JONSON EPICÆNE, OR THE SILENT WOMAN

Written and Acted, 1609; Published, 1616

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“Socrates. Without any one teaching
him he will recover his knowledge for himself,
if he is only asked questions.”

PLATO, Meno.

METHOD OF THE SERIES ,

This series is intended primarily for boys and girls of thirteen to fifteen. The pupil should first read right through each poem, essay, play or narrative in order to get a general knowledge of the subject-matter, but he may pass over obscure allusions or other difficulties. The whole comes before the part. In order that the teacher may be satisfied that this first reading has been done, a selection of questions is given which should be answered, either aloud or in writing, without the book. These questions are headed "A."

After this comes more detailed and intensive study, but it is important that this should not degenerate into mere cramming of the memory. The pupil should re-read the whole or parts of his text not in order to "get it up," but in order to find things out. A selection of questions is therefore given which aims at indicating some of the chief things which the pupil should find out if he is to enter into the mind of the writer. These questions, for which the pupil should be allowed the free use of his book, are headed "B."

A few of the questions headed "B" are marked with an asterisk (*) to indicate that they are intended for older pupils.

The pupil who, after obtaining a general knowledge of his subject-matter, has employed himself in making intelligent inquiries into it, may then profitably go further afield. For this purpose a selection is given of questions which involve reference to other books. The usefulness of these questions depends partly on the extent to which the pupil has access to the best English classics and to standard works of reference. But the teacher will often have such access even if the pupil has not. In this section again an asterisk (*) indicates that certain questions are intended for older pupils, and a number has been placed after those where reference is made to one of the books in the list given on the last page of this volume. This third set of questions is headed "C."

It is hoped that the notes at the end will be of use or interest to adult readers. They are not primarily intended for the pupil.

PREFACE TO THIS VOLUME

SHAKESPEARE does not stand alone in his greatness ; he is rather the greatest of a large number of great and lesser dramatists. From many of these he had much to learn, others learnt from him, but there were others still, who attempted a drama quite unlike his. As we do not blame the tragic writer for failing to be tragic, we must not blame Ben Jonson for failing to be Shakespeare. His plots and characters have their own peculiar excellences.

Ben Jonson (1573-1637), a younger contemporary of Shakespeare, was at once his admiring friend and his rival. He has received the very highest praise not only from Dryden, a scholar and critic, but from Pepys, a common-sense man of the world! The plays of the 17th and 18th centuries follow rather in his footsteps than in those of Shakespeare. Unlike Shakespeare, Jonson had a definite theory of dramatic art, and much of what we admire in Shakespeare was to him, and to most educated men of his age, artistically wrong. According to the classical view a play must have one place, one time, and one plot ; comedy, too, must be kept quite distinct from tragedy. Simplicity of outline and rigid correctness may bring certain faults in their train, but they also prevent certain other faults. A caricature even may have some advantages over a portrait.

Epicene is an excellent example of Jonson's method in comedy. His plot and characters are carefully worked out according to his principles, in clear, simple outlines so that nothing is out of place, nothing is out of perspective. By a careful study of the play, and the questions and comparisons that arise naturally from it, we may gain a better understanding not only of Jonson himself but also of Shakespeare. Then, like Dryden, we may truly say, "I admire him, but I love Shakespeare." Having learnt to admire the one, we shall have learnt to love the other.

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*Some expurgation has been necessary, especially
of the last Act.*

EPICŒNE, OR THE SILENT WOMAN

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Moroſe, a Gentleman that loves no noise.

Sir Dauphine Eugenie, a Knight, his Nephew.

Ned Clerimont, a Gentleman, his Friend.

Truewit, another Friend.

Sir John Daw, a Knight.

Sir Amorous La Foole, a Knight also.

Thomas Otter, a Land and Sea Captain.

Cutbeard, a Barber.

Mute, one of Moroſe's Servants.

Parson.

Page to Clerimont.

Epicane, supposed the Silent Woman.

Lady Haughty

Lady Centaure

Mistress Dol. Mavis

Mistress Otter, the Captain's Wife

Mistress Trusty, Lady Haughty's Woman }
Pages, Servants, &c. }
Ladies Collegiates. }
Pretenders.

Scene—London.

ACT I

SCENE I : A Room in Clerimont's House.

(Enter Clerimont, making himself ready, followed by his Page.)

Cler. Have you got the song yet perfect, I gave you, boy ?

Page. Yes, sir.

Cler. Let me hear it.

Page. You shall, sir ; but i' faith let nobody else.

Cler. Why, I pray ?

Page. It will get you the dangerous name of a poet in town, sir ; besides me a perfect deal of - - will at the mansion you wot of, whose lady is the argument of it, where the gentlewomen play with me and carry me in to my lady ; and she kisses me with her oiled face, and puts a periuke on my head ; and asks me an I will wear her gown ? . And I say no ; and then she hits me a blow o' the ear, and calls me Innocent ! and lets me go.

Cler. No marvel if the door be kept shut against your master, when the entrance is so easy to you—well, sir, you shall go there no more——. Sing, sir

[*Page sings.*

Still to be neat, still to be drest——

(Enter Truewit.)

True. Why, here's the man that can melt away his time, and never feels it ! What between his mistress abroad and his ingle at home, high fare, softlodging, fine clothes, and his fiddle ; he thinks the hours have no wings, or the day no post-horse. Well ! sir gallant, were you struck with the plague this minute, or condemned to any capital punishment to-morrow, you would begin then to think, and value every article of your time, esteem it at the true rate, and give all for it.

Cler. Why, what should a man do ?

True. Why, nothing ; or that which, when 'tis done, is as idle. Hearken after the next horse-race, or hunting-match, lay wagers, praise Puppy, or Pepperco'n', Whitefoot, Franklin ; swear upon Whitemane's party ; speak aloud, that my lords may hear you ; visit my ladies at night, and be able to give them the character of every bowler or better on the green. These be the things, wherein your fashionable men exercise themselves, and I for company.

Cler. Nay, if I have thy authority, I'll not leave yet. Come, the other are considerations, when we come to have gray heads, weak hams, and moist eyes. We'll think on 'em then ; then we'll pray and fast.

True. Ay, and destine only that time of age to goodness, which our want of ability will not let us employ in evil !

Cler. Why, then 'tis time enough. Foh ! thou hast read Plutarch's Morals, now, or some such tedious fellow ; and it shows so vilely with thee ! 'fore God, 'twill spoil thy wit utterly.

True. Well, sir ; if it will not take, I have learned to lose as little of my kindness as I can ; I'll do good to no man against his will, certainly. When were you at the college ?

Cler. What college ?

True. As if you knew not !

Cler. No, faith, I came but from court yesterday.

True. Why, is it not arrived there yet, the news ? A new foundation, sir, here in the town, of ladies, that call themselves the collegiates, an order between courtiers and country-madams, that live from their husbands ; and give entertainment to all the wits, and braveries of the time, as they call them ; cry down, or up, what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine authority ; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.

Cler. Who is the president ?

True. The grave and youthful matron, the Lady Haughty.

Cler. A pox of her autumnal face, her pieced beauty !

there's no man can be admitted till she be ready, now-a-days, till she has painted, and perfumed, and washed, and scoured, but the boy here; and him she wipes her oiled lips upon, like a sponge. I have made a song (I pray thee, hear it) on the subject.

[*Page sings.*

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
 As you were going to a feast ;
 Still to be powdered, still perfumed ;
 Lady it is to be presumed,
 Though art's hid causes are not found,
 All is not sweet, all is not sound.

 Give me a look, give me a face,
 That makes simplicity a grace ;
 Robes loosely flowing hair as free ;
 Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
 Than all the adulteries of art ;
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

True. And I am clearly on the other side ; I love a good dressing before any beauty o' the world. O, a woman is then like a delicate garden ; nor is there one kind of it ; she may vary every hour ; take often counsel of her glass, and choose the best. If she have good ears, shew them ; good hair, lay it out ; good legs, wear short clothes ; a good hand, discover it often ; practise any art to mend breath, cleanse teeth, repair eye-brows ; paint and profess it.

Cler. How ! publicly ?

True. The doing of it, not the manner ; that must be private. Many things that seem foul in the doing, do please done. A lady should, indeed, study her face, when we think she sleeps ; nor, when the doors are shut should men be enquiring : all is sacred within then. Is it for us to see their perukes put on, their false teeth, their complexion, their eyebrows, their nails ? You see gilders will not work, but enclosed. They must not discover how little serves, with the help of art, to adorn a great deal. No

more should servants approach their mistresses, but when they are complete and finished.

Cler. Well said, my Truewit.

True. And a wisc lady will keep a guard always upon the place, that she may do things securely. I once followed a rude fellow into a chamber, where the poor madam, for haste, and troubled, snatch'd at her peruke to cover her baldness ; and put it on the wrong way.

Cler. O prodigy !

True. And the unconscionable knave held her in compliment an hour with that reverst face, when I still look'd when she should talk from the t'other side.

Cler. Why, thou should'st have relieved her.

True. No, faith, I let her alone, as we'll let this argument, if you please, and pass to another. When saw you Dauphine Eugenie ?

Cler. Not these three days. Shall we go to him this morning ? He is very melancholy, I hear.

True. Sick of the uncle, is he ? I met that stiff piece of formality, his uncle, yesterday, with a huge turban of night-caps on his head, buckled over his ears.

Cler. O, that's his custom when he walks abroad. He can endure no noise, man.

True. So I have heard. But is the disease so ridiculous in him as it is made ? They say he has been upon divers treaties with the fish-wives and orange-women, and articles propounded between them ; marry, the chimney-sweepers will not be drawn in.

Cler. No, nor the broom-men ; they stand out stiffly. He cannot endure a costard-monger, he swoons if he hear one.

True. A trumpet should fright him terribly, or the hautboys.

Cler. Out of his senses. The waits of the city have a pension of him not to come near that ward. This youth practised on him one night like the bell-man ; and never

left till he had brought him down to the door, with a long sword ; and there left him flourishing with the air.

Page. Why, sir, he hath chosen a street to lie in so narrow at both ends, that it will receive no coaches, nor carts, nor any of these common noises ; and therefore we that love him devise to bring him in such as we may, now and then for his exercise, to breathe him. He would grow resty else in his ease ; his virtue would rust without action. I entreated a bearward one day to come down with the dogs of some four parishes that way, and I thank him he did ; and cried his games under Master Morose's windows ; till he was sent crying away with his head made a most bleeding spectacle to the multitude. And another time, a fencer marching to his prize had his drum most tragically run through, for taking that street in his way at my request.

True. A good wag ! how does he for he bells ?

Cler. O, in the Queen's time, he was wont to go out of town every Saturday at ten o'clock, or on holy-day eves. But now, by reason of the sickness, the perpetuity of ringing has made him devise a room, with double doors and treble ceilings ; the windows close shut and caulked : and there he lives by candle-light. He turned away a man last week, for having a pair of new shoes that creaked. And this fellow waits on him now in tennis court socks, or slippers soled with wool ; and they talk each to other in a trunk. See, who comes here ?

(Enter Sir Dauphine Eugenie.)

Dauph. How now ! what ail you, sirs ? dumb ?

True. Struck into stone, almost, I am here, with tales o' thine uncle. There was never such a prodigy heard of.

Dauph. I would you would once lose this subject, my masters, for my sake. They are such as you are, that have brought me into that predicament I am with him.

True. How is that ?

Dauph. Marry, that he will disinherit me ; no more. He

thinks I and my company are authors of all the ridiculous acts and monuments are told of him.

True. Disinherit thee ! he cannot, man. Art not thou next of blood, and his sister's son ?

Dauph. Ay, but he will thrust me out of it, he vows and marry.

True. How ! that's a more portent. Can he endure no noise, and will venture on a wife ?

Cler. Yes, why thou art a stranger, it seems, to his best trick yet. He has employed a fellow this half year all over England to hearken him out a dumb woman ; be she of any form, or any quality, her silence is dowry enough, he says.

True. But I trust to God he has found none.

Cler. No, but he has heard of one that's lodged in the next street to him, who is exceedingly soft-spoken ; thrifty of her speech ; that spends but six words a day. And her he's about now, and shall have her.

True. Is't possible ! Who is his agent in the business ?

Cler. Marry, a barber, one Cutbeard ; an honest fellow, one that tells Dauphine all here.

True. Why, you oppress me with wonder ; a woman, and a barber, and love no noise !

Cler. Yes, faith. The fellow trims him silently, and has not the knack with his shears or his fingers ; and that continence in a barber he thinks so eminent a virtue, as it has made him chief of his counsel.

True. Is the barber to be seen, or the wench ?

Cler. Yes, that they are.

True. I prithee, Dauphine, let's go thither.

Dauph. I have some business now ; I cannot, i' faith.

True. You shall have no business shall make you neglect this, sir ; we'll make her talk, believe it ; or, if she will not, we can give out at least so much as shall interrupt the treaty ; we will break it. Thou art bound in conscience, when he suspects thee without cause, to torment him.

Dauph. Not I, by any means. I'll give no suffrage to 't. He shall never have that plea against me, that I opposed the least phant'sy of his. Let it lie upon my stars to be guilty, I'll be innocent.

True. Yes, and be poor, and beg; do, innocent! I prithee, Ned, where lies she? Let him be innocent still.

Cler. Why, right over against the barbers; in the house where Sir John Daw lies.

True. You do not mean to confound me!

Cler. Why?

True. Does he that would marry her know so much?

Cler. I cannot tell.

True. 'Twere enough of imputation to her with him.

Cler. Why?

True. The only talking Sir in the town! Jack Daw! and he teach her not to speak! God be wi' you. I have some business too.

Cler. Will you not go thither, then?

True. Not with the danger to meet Daw, for mine ears.

Cler. Why, I thought you two had been upon very good terms.

True. Yes, of keeping distance.

Cler. They say he is a very good scholar.

True. Ay, and he says it first. A pox on him, a fellow that pretends only to learning, buys titles, and nothing else of books in him!

Cler. The world reports him to be very learned.

True. I am sorry the world should so conspire to belie him.

Cler. Good faith, I have heard very good things come from him.

True. You may: there's none so desperately ignorant to deny that: would they were his own! God be wi' you, gentlemen.

[*Exit hastily.*

Cler. This is very abrupt!

Dauph. Come, you are a strange open man, to tell everything thus.

Cler. Why, believe it, Dauphine, Truewit's a very honest fellow.

Dauph. I think no other; but this frank nature of his is not for secrets.

Cler. Nay then, you are mistaken, Dauphine; I know where he has been well trusted, and discharged the trust very truly and heartily.

Dauph. I contend not, Ned; but with the fewer a business is carried, it is ever the safer. Now we are alone, if you'll go thither, I am for you.

Cler. When were you there?

Dauph. Last night: and such a Decameron of sport fallen out, Boccace never thought of the like. Daw does nothing but court her; and the wrong way. He desires that she would talk and be free, and commends her silence in verses; which he reads, and swears are the best that ever man made. Then rails at his fortunes, stamps and mutines, why he is not made a counsellor, and called to affairs of state.

Cler. I prithee, let's go. I would fain partake this.— Some water, boy.

[*Exit Page.*

Dauph. We are invited to dinner together, he and I, by one that came thither to him, Sir La-Foole.

Cler. O, that's a precious mannikin!

Dauph. Do you know him?

Cler. Ay, and he will know you too, if e'er he saw you but once, though you should meet him at church in the midst of prayers. He is one of the braveries, though he be none of the wits. He will salute a judge upon the bench, and a bishop in the pulpit, a lawyer when he is pleading at the bar, and a lady when she is dancing in a masque, and put her out. He does give plays, and suppers, and invites his guests to them, aloud, out of his window,

as they ride by in coaches. He has a lodging in the Strand for the purpose ; or to watch when ladies are gone to the china houses, or the Exchange, that he may meet them by chance, and give them presents, some two or three hundred pounds worth of toys, to be laughed at. He is never without a spare banquet, or sweetmeats in his chamber, for their women to alight at and come up for a bait.

Dauph. Excellent ! he was a fine youth last night ; but now he is much finer ! What is his Christian name ? I have forgot.

(Enter *Page.*)

Cler. Sir Amorous La-Foole.

Page. The gentleman is here below that owns that name.

Cler. 'Heart, he's come to invite me to dinner, I hold my life.

Dauph. Like enough : prithee, let's have him up.

Cler. Boy, marshal him.

Page. With a truncheon, sir ?

Cler. Away, I bseech you. [Exit *Page.*] I'll make him tell us his pedigree now ; and what meat he has to dinner ; and who are his guests ; and the whole course of his fortunes ; with a breath.

(Enter *Sir Amorous La-Foole.*)

La-F. 'Save, dear Sir Dauphine ! honoured Master Clerimont !

Cler. Sir Amorous ! you have very much honested my lodging with your presence.

La-F. Good faith, it is a fine lodging : almost as delicate a lodging as mine.

Cler. Not so, sir.

La-F. Excuse me, sir, if it were in the Strand, I assure you. I am come, Master Clerimont, to entreat you to wait upon two or three ladies, to dinner, to-day.

Cler. How sir ! wait upon them ? did you ever see me carry dishes ?

La-F. No, sir dispense with me ; I meant to bear them company.

Cler. O, that I will, sir : the doubtfulness of your phrase, believe it, sir, would breed you a quarrel once an hour, with the terrible boys, if you should but keep them fellowship a day.

La-F. It should be extremely against my will, sir, if I contested with any man.

Cler. I believe it, sir, where hold you your feast ?

La-F. At Tom Otter's, sir.

Dauph. Tom Otter ! What's he ?

La-F. Captain Otter, sir ; he is a kind of gamester, but he has had command both by sea and by land.

Dauph. O, then he is *animal amphibium* ?

La-F. Ay, sir : his wife was the rich china-woman, that the courtiers visited so often ; that gave the rare entertainment. She commands all at home.

Cler. Then she is Captain Otter.

La-F. You say very well, sir ; she is my kinswoman, a La-Foole by the mother-side, and will invite any great ladies for my sake.

Dauph. Not of the La-Fooles of Essex ?

La-F. No, sir ; the La-Fooles of London.

Cler. Now he's in.

[*Aside.*]

La-F. They all come out of our house, the La-Fooles of the north, the La-Fooles of the west, the La-Fooles of the east and south—we are as ancient a family as any is in Europe—but I myself am descended lineally of the French La-Fooles—and, we do bear for our coat yellow, or *or*, checkered *azure*, and *gules*, and some three or four colours more, which is a very noted coat, and has sometimes been solemnly worn by divers nobility of our house—but let that go, antiquity is not respected now.—I had a brace of fat does sent me, gentlemen, and half a dozen of pheasants, a dozen or two of godwits, and some other fowl, which I would have eaten, while they are good, and in good com-

pany :—there will be a great lady or two, my Lady Haughty, my Lady Centaure, Mistress Dol Mavis—and they come o' purpose to see the silent gentlewoman, Mistress Epicoene, that honest Sir John Daw has promised to bring thither—and then, Mistress Trusty, my lady's woman, will be there too, and this honourable knight, Sir Dauphine, with yourself, Master Clerimont—and we'll be very merry, and have fiddlers, and dance.—I have been a mad wag in my time, and have spent some crowns since I was a page in court, to my Lord Lofty, and after, my Lady's gentleman-usher, who got me knighted in Ireland, since it pleased my elder brother to die.—I had as fair a gold jerkin on that day as any worn in the island voyage, or at Cadiz, none dispraised ; and I came over in it hither, shewed myself to my friends in court, and after 't down to my tenanis in the country, and surveyed :t lands, let new leases, took their money, spent it in the eye o' the land here, upon ladies :—and now I can take up at my pleasure.

Dauph. Can you, sir ?

Cler. O, let him breathe, he has not recovered.

La-F. I meant money, which can take up anything. I have another guest or two to invite, and say as much to, gentlemen. I'll take my leave abruptly, in hope you will not fail— Your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Dauph. We will not fail you, sir precious La-Foole ; but she shall, that your ladies come to see, if I have credit afore Sir Daw.

Cler. Did you ever hear such a wind-sucker as this ?

Dauph. Or such a rook as the other, that will betray his mistress to be seen ! Come, 'tis time we prevented it.

Cler. Go.

[*Exeunt.*]

EPICENE, OR THE SILENT WOMAN

ACT II

SCENE I.—A Room in Morose's House.

(Enter Morose, with a tube in his hand, followed by Mute.)

Mor. Cannot I yet find out a more compendious method, than by this trunk, to save my servants the labour of speech, and mine ears the discords of sounds ? Let me see : all discourses but my own afflict me ; they seem harsh, impertinent, and irksome. Is it not possible, that thou shouldest answer me by signs, and I apprehend thee, fellow ? Speak not, though I question you. You have taken the ring off from the street door, as I bade you ? answer me not by speech, but by silence ; unless it be otherwise. [Mute makes a leg.]—very good. And you have fastened on a thick quilt, or flock-bed, on the outside of the door ; that if they knock with their daggers, or with brick-bats, they can make no noise ? But with your leg, your answer, unless it be otherwise. [Mute makes a leg.]—Very good. This is not only fit modesty in a servant, but good state and discretion in a master. And you have been with Cutbeard the barber, to have him come to me ? [Mute makes a leg.] Good. And he will come presently ? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise ; if it be otherwise, shake your head, or shrug. [Makes a leg.]—So ! Your Italian and Spaniard are wisc in these ; and it is a frugal and comely gravity. How long will it be ere Cutbeard come ? Stay !—if an hour, hold up your whole hand ; if half an hour, two fingers ; if a quarter, one. [Holds up one finger bent.]—Good : half a quarter, 'tis well. And have you given him a key, to come in without knocking ? [Makes a leg.]—good ! And is the lock oiled, and the hinges, to-day ? [Makes a leg.]—Good. And the quilting of the stairs nowhere worn out and bare ? [Makes a leg.]—Very good. I see by much doctrine, and impulsion, it may be

effected ; stand by. The Turk, in this aivine discipline, is admirable, exceeding all the potentates of the earth ; still waited on by mutes ; and all his commands so executed ; yea, evn in the war, as I have heard, and in his marches, most of his charges and directions given by signs, and with silence ; an exquisite art ! and I am heartily ashamed, and angry oftentimes, that the princes of Christendom should suffer a barbarian to transcend them in so high a point of felicity. I will practise it hereafter. [A horn winded within.] How now ? Oh ! Oh ! what villain, what prodigy of mankind is that ? Look. [Exit Mute.] [Horn again.] Oh ! cut his throat, cut his throat ! what murderer, hell-hound, devil can this be ?

(Re-enter Mute.)

Mute. It is a post from the court——

Mor. Out, rogue ! and must thou blow thy horn too ?

Mute. Alas, it is a post from the court, sir, that says he must speak with you, pain of death——

Mor. Pain of thy life, be silent ! .

(Enter Truewit, with a post-horn, and a halter in his hand.)

True. By your leave, sir ; I am a stranger here : Is your name Master Morose ? Is your name Master Morose ? Fishes ! Pythagoreans all ! This is strange. What say you, sir ? Nothing ? Has Harpocrates been here, with his club, among you ? Well, sir, I will believe you to be the man at this time : I will venture upon you, sir. Your friends at court commend them to you, sir——

Mor. O men ! O manners ! was there ever such an impudence ?

True. And are extremely solicitous for you, sir.

Mor. Whose knave are you ?

True. Mine own knave, and your compeer, sir.

Mor. Fetch me my sword——

True. You shall taste the one half of my dagger, if you do, groom ; and you the other, if you stir, sir. Be patient, I charge you, in the King's name, and hear me

without insurrection. They say, you are to marry ; to marry ! do you mark, sir ?

Mor. How then, rude companion !

True. Marry, your friends do wonder, sir, the Thames being so near, wherein you may drown so handsomely ; or London Bridge, at a low fall, with a fine leap, to hurry you down the stream ; or, such a delicate steeple in the town, as Bow, to vault from ; or, a braver height, as Paul's ; or, if you affected to do it nearer home, and a shorter way, an excellent garret-window into the street ; or, a beam in the said garret, with this halter [*shews him the halter*] which they have sent, and desire, that you would sooner commit your grave head to this knot, than to the wedlock noose ; or, take a little sublimate, and go out of the world like a rat ; any way rather than follow this goblin Matrimony. Alas, sir, do you ever think to find a chaste wife in these times ? now ? when there are so many masques, plays, Puritan preachings, mad folks, and other strange sights to be seen daily, private and public. I'll tell you, sir, the monstrous hazards you shall run with a wife.

Mor. Good sir, have I ever cozened any friends of yours of their land ? bought their possessions ? taken forfeit of their mortgage ? Have I made an assassinate upon your father ? What have I done that may deserve this ?

True. Alas, sir, I am but a messenger ; I but tell you, what you must hear. It seems, your friends are careful after your soul's health, sir, and would have you know the danger (but you may do your pleasure, for all them ; I persuade not, sir). If, after you are married, your wife do run away with a vaulter, or the Frenchman that walks upon ropes, or him that dances the jig, or a fencer for his skill at his weapon ; why, it is not their fault, they have discharged their consciences ; when you know what may happen. Nay, suffer valiantly, sir, for I must tell you all the perils that you are obnoxious to. If she be rich,

and that you marry her dowry, not her, she'll reign in your house as imperious as a widow. If noble, all her kindred will be your tyrants. If learned, there was never such a parrot ; all your patrimony will be too little for the guests that must be invited, to hear her speak Latin and Greek. If precise, you must feast all the silenced brethren, once in three days ; salute the sisters ; entertain the whole family, or wood of them ; and hear long-winded exercises, singings, and catechisings, which you are not given to, and yet must give for ; to please the zealous matron your wife, who, for the holy cause, will cozen you over and above. You begin to sweat, sir ! but this is not half, i' faith ; you may do your pleasure, notwithstanding, as I said before : I come not to persuade you. [*Mute is stealing away.*] Upon my faith, master serving-man, if you do stir, I will beat you.

Mor. O, what is my sin ? what is my sin ?

True. Then if you love your wife, or rather dote on her, sir : O, how she'll torture you, and take pleasure in your torments ! Then she must have that rich gown for such a great day ; a new one for the next ; a richer for the third ; be served in silver ; have her chamber filled with a succession of grooms, footmen, ushers, and other messengers ; besides embroiderers, jewellers, tirewomen, sempsters, feathermen, perfumers ; whilst she feels not how the land drops away, nor the acres melt ; nor foresees the change, when the mercer has your woods for her velvets ; never weighs what her pride costs, sir ; so she be a stateswoman, know all the news, what was done at Salisbury, what at the Bath, what at the court, what in progress ; or so she may censure poets, and authors, and styles, and compare them ; Daniel with Spenser, Jonson with the t'other youth, and so forth ; or be thought cunning in controversies, or the very knots of divinity ; and have often in her mouth the state of the question ; and then skip to the mathematics and demonstration——

Mor. O ! O !

Truc. All thls is very true, sir. And then her going in disguise to that conjurer, and this cunning woman : where the first question is, how soon you shall die ? next, if her present servant love her ? next, if she shall have a new servant ? and how many ? what precedence she shall have by her next match ? and sets down the answers, and believes them above the scriptures. Nay, perhaps she'll study the art.

Mor. Gentle sir, have you done ? Have you had your pleasure of me ? I'll think of these things.

True. Yes, sir ; and then comes reeking home of vapour and sweat, with going a foot, and lies in a month of a new face, all oil and birdlime ; and rises in asses' milk, and is cleansed with a new fucus. God be wi' you, sir. God be wi' you. I'll be bold to leave this rope with you, sir, for a remembrance. Farewell, Mute !

[*Exit.*

Mor. Come, have me to my chamber ; but first shut the door. [*Truewit sounds the horn without.*] O, shut the door, shut the door ! Is he come again.

(Enter Cutbeard.)

Cut. 'Tis I, sir, your barber.

Mor. O, Cutbeard, Cutbeard, Cutbeard ! here has been a cut-throat with me : help me in to my bed, and give me physic with thy counsel.

SCENE II.—A Room in Sir John Daw's House.

(Enter Daw, Clerimont, Dauphine, and Epicene.)

Daw. Nay, an she will, let her refuse at her own charges ; 'tis nothing to me, gentlemen ; but she will not be invited to the like feasts or guests every day.

Cler. O, by no means, she may not refuse—[aside to Epicene] to stay at home, if you love your reputation. 'Slight ! you are invited thither o' purpose to be seen,

and laughed at, by the lady of the college, and her shadows.
This trumpeter hath proclaimed you.

Dauph. [aside to *Epi.*]. You shall not go ; let him be
laughed at in your stead, for not bringing you ; and put
him to his extemporal faculty of fooling and talking loud,
to satisfy the company.

Cler. [aside to *Epi.* and *Dauph.*]. He will suspect us ;
talk aloud—Pray, Mistress Epicene, let's see your verses ;
we have Sir John Daw's leave. Do not conceal your
servant's merits and your own glories.

Epi. They'll prove my servant's glories, if you have
his leave so soon.

Dauph. His vain-glories, lady.

Daw. Show them, show them, mistress. I dare own
them.

Epi. Judge you, what glories.

Daw. Nay, I'll read them myself, too ; an author must
recite his own works. It is a madrigal of Modesty.

“ Modest and fair, for fair and good are near
Neighbours, howe'er.”

Dauph. Very good.

Cler. Ay, is't not ?

Daw. “ No noble virtue ever was alone,
But two in one.”

Dauph. Excellent.

Cler. That again, I pray, Sir John.

Dauph. It has something in't like rare wit and sense.

Cler. Peace.

Daw. “ No noble virtue ever was alone
But two in one.
Then, when I praise sweet modesty, I praise
Bright beauty's rays ;
And having praised both beauty and modesty,
I have praised thec.”

Dauph. Admirable !

Cler. How it chimes, and cries tink in the close, divinely !

Dauph. Ay, 'tis Seneca.

Cler. No, I think 'tis Plutarch.

Daw. The dor on Plutarch and Seneca ! I hate it : they are mine own imaginations, by that light. I wonder those fellows have such credit with gentlemen.

Cler. They are very grave authors.

Daw. Grave asses ! mere essayists ; a few loose sentences, and that's all. A man would talk so his whole age ; I do utter as good things every hour, if they were collected and observed, as either of them.

Dauph. Indeed, Sir John !

Cler. He must needs ; living among the wits and braveries too.

Dauph. Ay, and being president of them, as he is.

Daw. There's Aristotle, a mere commonplace fellow ; Plato, a discourser ; Thucydides and Livy, tedious and dry ; Tacitus, an entire knot ; sometimes worth the untying. very seldom.

Cler. What do you think of the poets, Sir John ?

Daw. Not worthy to be named for authors. Homer, an old tedious, prolix ass, talks of curriers, and chines of beef ; Virgil, of dunging of land, and bees ; Horace, of I know not what.

Cler. I think so.

Daw. And so Pindarus, Lycophron, Anacreon, Catullus, Seneca the tragedian, Lucan, Propertius, Tibullus, Martial, Juvenal, Ausonius, Statius, Politian, Valerius Flaccus, and the rest.

Cler. What a sack full of their names he has got !

Dauph. And how he pours them out ! Politian with Valerius Flaccus.

Cler. Was not the character right of him ?

Dauph. As could be made, i' faith.

Daw. And Persius, a crabbed coxcomb, not to be endure

Dauph. Why, whom do you account for authors, Sir John Daw?

Daw. Syntagma Juris Civilis; Corpus Juris Civilis; Corpus Juris Canonici; the King of Spain's Bible—

Dauph. Is the King of Spain's Bible an author?

Cler. Yes, and Syntagma.

Dauph. What was that Syntagma, sir?

Daw. A civil lawyer, a Spaniard.

Dauph. Sure, Corpus was a Dutchman.

Cler. Ay, both the Corpuses, I knew 'em; they were very corpulent authors.

Daw. And then there's Vatibus, Pomponatius, Symancha; the other are not to be received, within the thought of a scholar.

Dauph. 'Fore God, you have a simple learned servant, lady, — [aside] in titles.

Cler. I wonder that he is not called to the helm, and made a counsellor.

Dauph. He is one extraordinary.

Cler. Nay, but in ordinary; to say truth, the state wants such.

Dauph. Why, that will follow.

Cler. I muse a mistress can be so silent to the dotes of such a servant.

Daw. 'Tis her virtue, sir. I have written somewhat of her silence too.

Dauph. In verse, Sir John?

Cler. What else?

Dauph. Why, how can you justify your own being of a poet, that so slight all the old poets?

Daw. Why, every man that writes in verse is not a poet; you have of the wits that write verses, and yet are no poets; they are poets that live by it, the poor fellows that live by it.

Dauph. Why, would you not live by your verses, Sir John?

Cler. No, 'twere pity he should. A knight live by his verses ! he did not make them to that end, I hope !

Dauph. And yet the noble Sidney lives by his, and the noble family not ashamed.

Cler. Ay, he protest himself : but Sir John Daw has more caution : he'll not hinder his own rising in the state so much. Do you think he will ? Your verscs, good Sir John, and no poems.

Daw. "Silence in woman, is like speech in man,
Deny't who can."

Dauph. Not I, believe it ; your reason, sir.

Daw. "Nor is 't a tale
That female vice should be a virtue male,
Or masculine vice a female virtue be:
 You shall it see
 Prov'd with increase ;
I know to speak, and she to hold her peace."

Do you conceive me, gentlemen ?

Dauph. No, faith.

(Enter Truewit with his horn. Sir John walks aside with his papers.)

Cler. See, here's Truewit again ! Where hast thou been, in the name of madness, thus accoutr'd with thy horn ?

True. Where the sound of it might have pierced your senses with gladness, had you been in ear-reach of it. Dauphine, fall down and worship me ; I have forbid the banns, lad ; I have been with thy virtuous uncle, and have broke the match.

Dauph. You have not, I hope.

True. Yes, faith : an thou shouldst hope otherwise, I should repent me ; this horn got me entrance ; kiss it. I had no other way to get in, but by feigning to be a post ; but when I got in once, I proved none, but rather the

contrary, turned him into a post, or a stane, or what is stiffer, with thundering into him the incommodities of a wife, and the miseries of marriage. If ever Gorgon were seen in the shape of a woman, he hath seen her in my description ; I have put him off o' that scent for ever. Why do you not applaud, and adore me, sirs ? why stand you mute ? are you stupid ? You are not worthy of the benefit.

Dauph. Did not I tell you ? Mischief !

Cler. I would you had placed this benefit somewhere else.

True. Why so ?

Cler. 'Slight, you have done the most inconsiderate, rash, weak thing, that ever man did to his friend.

Dauph. Friend ! If the most malicious enemy I have, had studied to inflict an injury upon me, it could not be a greater.

True. Wherein, for God's sake ? Gentlemen, come to yourselves again.

Dauph. But I presaged thus much afore to you.

Cler. Would my lips had been soldered when I speake on 't. 'Slight, what moved you to be thus impertinent ?

True. My masters, do not put on this strange face to pay my courtesy ; off with this visor. Have good turns done you, and thank 'em this way !

Dauph. 'Fore Heaven, you have undone me. That which I have plotted for, and been maturing now these four months, you have blasted in a minute. Now I am lost, I may speak. This gentlewoman was lodged here by me o' purpose, and, to be put upon my uncle, hath profest this obstinate silence for my sake ; being my entire friend, and one that for the requital of such a fortune as to marry him, would have made me very ample conditions ; where now all my hopes are utterly miscarried by this unlucky incident.

Cler. Thus 'tis when a man will be ignorantly officious, do services, and not know his why. I wonder what courteous

itch possesst you. You never did absurd part in your life, nor a greater trespass to friendship or humanity.

Dauph. Faith, you may forgive it best ; 'twas your cause principally.

Cler. I know it ; would it had not.

(Enter Cutbeard.)

Dauph. How now, Cutbeard ! What news ?

Cut. The best, the happiest that ever was, sir. There has been a mad gentleman with your uncle this morning, [seeing Trucwit]—I think this be the gentleman—that has almost talked him out of his wits, with threatening him from marriage—

Dauph. On, I prithee !

Cut. And your uncle, sir, he thinks 'twas done by your procurement ; therefore he will see the party you wot of presently ; and, if he like her, he says, and that she be so inclining to dumb, as I have told him, he swears he will marry her to-day, instantly, and not defer it a minute longer.

Dauph. Excellent ! beyond our expectation !

True. Beyond our expectation ! By this light, I knew it would be thus.

Dauph. Nay, sweet Trucwit, forgive me.

True. No ! I was “ignorantly officious, impertinent” ; this was the “absurd, weak part.”

Cler. Wilt thou ascribe that to merit now, was mere fortune ?

True. Fortune ! mere providence. Fortune had not a finger in 't. I saw it must necessarily in nature fall out so ; my genius is never false to me in these things. Shew me how it could be otherwise.

Dauph. Nay, gentlemen, contend not ; 'tis well now.

True. Alas, I let him go on with “inconsiderate,” and “rash,” and what he pleased.

Cler. Away, thou strange justifier of thyself, to be wiser than thou wert, by the event.

True. Event ! by this light, thou shalt never persuade me, but I foresaw it as well as the stars themselves.

Dauph. Nay, gentlemen, 'tis well now. Do you two entertain Sir John Daw with discourse, while I send her away with instructions.

True. I'll be acquainted with her first, by your favour.

Cler. Master Truewit, lady, a friend of ours.

True. I am sorry I have not known you, sooner, lady, to celebrate this rare virtue of your silence.

[*Exeunt Epi., Dauph. and Cut.*]

Cler. Faith, an you had come sooner, you should have seen and heard her well celebrated in Sir John Daw's Madrigals.

True. [*Advances to Daw.*] Jack Daw, God save you, when saw you La-Foole ?

Daw. Not since last night, Master Truewit.

True. That's a miracle ! I thought you two had been inseparable.

Daw. He's gone to invite his guests.

True. 'Odso ! 'tis true ! What a false memory have I towards that man ! I am one. I met him even now, upon that he calls his delicate fine black horse, rid into foam, with posting from place to place, and person to person, to give them the cue—

Cler. Lest they should forget ?

True. Yes : there was never poor captain took more pains at a muster to shew men, than he, at this meal, to shew friends.

Daw. It is his quarter-feast, sir.

Cler. What, do you say so, Sir John ?

True. Nay, Jack Daw will not be out, at the best friends he has, to the talent of his wits. Where's his mistress, to hear and applaud him ? Is she gone ?

Daw. Is Mistress Epicōene gone ?

Cler. Gone afore with Sir Dauphine, I warrant, to the place.

True. Gone afore ! that were a manifest injury, a disgrace and a half ; to refuse him at such a festival-time as this, being a bravery, and a wit too :

Cler. Tut, he'll swallow it like cream : he's better read in Jure civili, than to esteem anything a disgrace is offered him from a mistress.

Daw. Nay, let her e'en go ; she shall sit alone, and be dumb in her chamber, a week together, for John Daw, I warrant her. Does she refuse me ?

Cler. No, sir ; do not take it so to heart ; she does not refuse you, but a little neglects you. Good faith, Truewit, you were to blame to put it into his head, that she does refuse him.

True. Sir, she does refuse him palpably, however you mince it. An I were as he, I would swear to speak ne'er a word to her to-day for 't.

Daw. By this light, no more I will not.

True. Nor to anybody else, sir.

Daw. Nay, I will not say so, gentlemen.

Cler. [Aside.] It had been an excellent happy condition for the company, if you could have drawn him to it.

Daw. I'll be very melancholy, i' faith.

Cler. As a dog, if I were as you, Sir John.

True. Or a snail, or a hog-louse ; I would roll myself up for this day ; in troth, they should not unwind me.

Daw. By this pick-tooth, so I will.

Cler. 'Tis well done. [Aside.] He begins already to be angry with his teeth.

Daw. Will you go, gentlemen ?

Cler. Nay, you must walk alone, if you be right melancholy, Sir John.

True. Yes, sir, we'll dog you, we'll follow you afar off.

[Exit *Daw.*]

Cler. Was there ever such a two yards of knighthood measured out by time, to be sold to laughter ?

True. A mere talking mole, hang him ! No mushroom

was ever so fresh. A fellow so utterly nothing as he knows not what he would be.

Cler. Let's follow him, but first let's go to Dauphine, he's hovering about the house to hear what news.

True. Content.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in Morose's House.

(Enter *Morose and Mute, followed by Cutbeard and Epicæne.*)

Mor. Welcome Cutbeard ! draw near with your fair charge ; and in her ear softly entreat her to unmask. [*Epi. takes off her mask.*] So ! Is the door shut ? [*Mute makes a leg.*] Enough ! Now, Cutbeard, with the same discipline I use to my family, I will question you. As I conceive, Cutbeard, this gentlewoman is she you have provided, and brought, in hope she will fit me in the place and person of a wife ? Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise. [*Cut. makes a leg.*]—Very well done, Cutbeard. I conceive besides, Cutbeard, you have been pre-acquainted with her birth, education, and qualities, or else you would not prefer her to my acceptance, in the weighty consequence of marriage. [*Makes a leg.*] This I conceive, Cutbeard. Answer me not but with your leg, unless it be otherwise. [*Bows again.*]—Very well done, Cutbeard. Give aside now a little, and leave me to examine her condition, and aptitude to my affection. [*Goes about her and views her.*]—She is exceeding fair, and of a special good favour ; a sweet composition or harmony of limbs. The knave hath exceedingly well fitted me without ; I will now try her within.—Come near, fair gentlewoman : let not my behaviour seem rude, though unto you, being rare, it may haply appear strange. [*Epi. curtsies.*] Nay, lady, you may speak, though Cutbeard and my man might not ; for of all sounds, only the sweet voice of a fair lady has the just length of mine ears. I beseech you, say, lady ;

out of the first fire of meeting eyes, they say, love is stricken ; do you feel any such motion suddenly shot into you, from any part you see in me ? ha, lady ? [*Epi. curtsies.*]—Alas, lady, these answers by silent curtsies from you are too courtless, and simple. I have ever had my breeding in court, and she that shall be my wife, must be accomplished with courtly and audacious ornaments. Can you speak, lady ?

Epi. [softly.] Judge you, forsooth.

Mor. What say you, lady ? speak out, I beseech you.

Epi. Judge you, forsooth.

Mor. On my judgment, a divine softness ! But can you naturally, lady, as I enjoin these by doctrine and industry, refer yourself to the search of my judgment, and, not taking pleasure in your tongue, which is a woman's chiefest pleasure, think it plausible to answer me by silent gestures so long as my speeches jump right with what you conceive ? [*Epi. curtsies.*]—Excellent ! Divine ! If it were possible she should hold out thus !—Peace, Cutbeard, thou art made for ever, as thou hast made me, if this felicity have lasting ; but I will try her further. Dear lady, I am courtly, I tell you, and I must have mine ears banqueted with pleasant and witty conferences. The ladies in court think it a most desperate impair to their quickness of wit, and good carriage, if they cannot give occasion to a man to court 'em. And do you alone so much differ from all them, that what they, with so much circumstance, affect and toil for, to seem learned, to seem judicious, to seem sharp and conceited, you can bury in yourself with silence, and rather trust your graces to the fair conscience of virtue, than to the world's or your own proclamation ?

Epi. [softly.] I should be sorry else.

Mor. What say you, lady ? good lady, speak out.

Epi. I should be sorry else.

Mor. That sorrow doth fill me with gladness. O Morose, thou art happy above mankind ! Pray that thou mayest

contain thyself. I will only put her to it once more, and it shall be with the utmost touch and test of their sex. But hear me, fair lady : I do also love to see her whom I shall choose for my wife, to be the first and principal in all fashions, precede all the dames at court by a fortnight, have council of tailors, lineners, lace-women, embroiderers ; and sit with them sometimes twice a day upon French intelligences, and then come forth varied like nature, or oftener than she, and better by the help of art, her emulous servant. This do I affect ; and how will you be able, lady, with this frugality of speech, to give the manifold (but necessary) instructions, for that bodice, these sleeves, those skirts, this cut, that stitch, this embroidery, that lace, this wire, those knots, that ruff, those roses, this girdle, that fan, the t'other scarf, these gloves ? Ha ! what say you, lady ?

Epi. [softly.] I'll leave it to you, sir.

Mor. How, lady ? Pray you, rise a note.

Epi. I leave it to wisdom and you, sir.

Mor. Admirable creature ! I will trouble you no more ; I will not sin against so sweet a simplicity. Let me now be bold to print on those divine lips the seal of being mine.—Cutbeard, I give thee the lease of thy house free ; thank me not but with thy leg. [*Cut.* shakes his head.]—I know what thou wouldest say, she's poor, and her friends deceased. She has brought a wealthy dowry in her silence, Cutbeard ; and in respect of her poverty, Cutbeard, I shall have her more loving and obedient, Cutbeard. Go thy ways, and get me a minister presently, with a soft, low voice to marry us ; and pray him he will not be impertinent, but brief as he can ; away : softly, Cutbeard ! [*Exit Cut.*]—Sirrah, conduct your mistress into the dining-room, your now mistress. [*Exit Mute, followed by Epi.*] O, my felicity ! How shall I be revenged on mine insolent kinsman, and his plots to fright me from marrying ! [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV: A Lane near Morose's House.

(Enter *Truewit, Dauphine and Clerimont.*)*True.* Are you sure he is not gone by ?*Dauph.* No, I staid in the shop ever since.*Cler.* But he may take the other end of the lane.*Dauph.* No, I told him I would be here at this end ; I appointed him hither.*True.* What a barbarian it is to stay then !*Dauph.* Yonder he comes. . . .*Cler.* And his charge left behind him, which is a very good sign, Dauphine.(Enter *Cutbeard.*)*Dauph.* How now, Cutbeard ! succeeds it or no ?*Cut.* Past imagination, sir, *omnia secunda* ; you could not have prayed to have had it so well. *Saltat senex*, as it is in the proverb ; he does triumph in his felicity, admires the party ! he has given me the lease of my house too ! and I am now going for a silent minister to marry them, and away.*True.* 'Slight, get one of the silenced ministers ; a zealous brother would torment him purely.*Cut.* *Cum privilegio*, sir.*Dauph.* Oh, by no means ; let's do nothing to hinder it now ; when 'tis done and finished, I am for you, for any device of vexation.*Cut.* And that shall be within this half-hour, upon my dexterity, gentlemen. Contrive what you can in the mean time, *bonis avibus*.

[Exit.]

Cler. How the slave doth Latin it !*True.* It would be made a jest to posterity, sirs, this day's mirth, if ye will.*Cler.* Beshrew his heart that will not, I pronounce.*Dauph.* And for my part. What is it ?

True. To translate all La-Foole's company, and his feast thither, to-day, to celebrate this bride-ale.

Dauph. Ay, marry; but how will 't be done?

True. I'll undertake the directing of all the lady-guests thither, and then the meat must follow.

Cler. For God's sake, let's effect it; it will be an excellent comedy of affliction, so many several noises.

Dauph. But are they not at the other place already, think you?

True. I'll warrant you for the college-honours; one of their faces has not the priming colour laid on yet, nor the other her smock sleek'd.

Cler. O, but they'll rise earlier than ordinary to a feast.

True. Best go see, and assure ourselves.

Cler. Who knows the house?

True. I'll lead you. Were you never there yet?

Dauph. Not I.

Cler. Nor I.

True. Where have you lived then? not know Tom Otter!

Cler. No: for God's sake, what is he?

True. An excellent animal, equal with your Daw or La-Foole, if not transcendent; and does Latin it as much as your barber. He is his wife's subject. He calls her princess, and at such times as these follows her up and down the house like a page, with his hat off, partly for heat, partly for reverence. At this instant he is marshalling of his bull, bear, and horse.

Dauph. What be those, in the name of Sphinx?

True. Why, sir, he has been a great man at the Bear-garden in his time; and from that subtle sport has ta'en the witty denomination of his chief carousing cups. One he calls his bull, another his bear, another his horse. And then he has his lesser glasses, that he calls his deer and his ape; and several degrees of them too; and never is well,

nor thinks any entertainment perfect, till these be brought out, and set on the cupboard.

Cler. For God's love! we should miss this if we should not go.

True. Nay, he has a thousand things as good, that will speak him all day. He will rail on his wife, with certain commonplaccs, behind her back, and to her face—

Dauph. No more of him. Let's go see him, I petition you.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I : A Room in Otter's House.

(Enter Captain Otter, with his cups, and Mistress Ott.)

Ott. Nay, good princess, hear me *pauca verba*.

Mrs. Ott. By that light, I'll have you chained up, with your bull-dogs, and bear-dogs, if you be not civil the sooner. I'll send you to kennel, i' faith. You were best bait me with your bull, bear, and horse. Never a time that the courtiers or collegiates come to the house, but you make it a Shrove Tuesday! I would have you get your Whitsun-tide velvet cap, and your staff in your hand, to entertain them; yes, in troth, do.

Ott. Not so, princess, neither; but under correction, sweet princess, give me leave. These things I am known to the courtiers by. It is reported to them for my humour, and they receive it so, and do expect it. Tom Otter's bull, bear, and horse is known all over England, *in rerum natura*.

Mrs. Ott. 'Fore me, I will *na-ture* them over to Paris-garden, and *na-ture* you thither too, if you^w pronounce them again. Is a bear a fit beast, or a bull, to mix in society with great ladies? Think in your discretion, in any good policy.

Ott. The horse then, good princess.

Mrs. Ott. Well, I am contented for the horse then ; they love to be well horsed, I know ; I love it myself.

Ott. And it is a delicate fine horse this, *Poetarum Pegasus*. Under correction, princess, Jupiter did turn himself into a—*taurus*, or bull, under correction, good princess.

(Enter behind, *Truewit*, *Clerimont*, and *Dauphine*.)

Mrs. Ott. By my integrity, I'll send you over to the Bank Side. I'll commit you to the master of the Garden, if I hear but a syllable more. Must my house or my roof be polluted with the scent of bears and bulls, when it is perfumed for great ladies ? Is this according to the instrument when I married you ? that I would be princess, and reign in mine own house, and you would be my subject, and obey me ? What did you bring me, should make you thus peremptory ? Do I allow you your half-crown a day, to spend where you will, among your gamesters, to vex and torment me at such times as these ? Who gives you your maintenance, I pray you ? who allows you your horse-meat, and man's meat ? your three suits of apparel a year ? your four pair of stockings, one silk, three worsted ? your clean linen, your bands and cuffs, when I can get you to wear them ?—'tis marvel you have them on now. Who graces you with courtiers and great personages, to speak to you out of their coaches, and come home to your house ? Were you ever so much as look'd upon by a lord or a lady, before I married you ?

True. [A. i.d.c.] For God's sake, let's go stave her off him.

Mrs. Ott. Answer me to that. And did not I take you up from thence, in an old greasy buff doublet, with points, and green velvet sleeves, out at the elbows ? You forget this.

True. [As.de.] She'll worry him, if we help not in time.

(They come forward.)

Mrs. Ott. O, here are some of the gallants ! Go to,

behave yourself distinctly, and with good morality; or, I protest, I'll take away your exhibition.

True. By your leave, fair Mistress Otter, I'll be bold to enter these gentlemen in your acquaintance.⁹

Mrs. Ott. It shall not be obnoxious, or difficil, sir.

True. How does my noble captain? Is the bull, bear, and horse in *rerum natura* still?

Ott. Sir, *sic visum superis.*

Mrs. Ott. I would you would but intimate them, do. Go your ways in, and get toasts, and butter, made for the wood-cocks: that's a fit province for you.

[Drives him off.]

Cler. Alas, what a tyranny is this poor fellow married to.

True. O, but the sport will be anon, when we get him loose.

Dauph. Dares he ever speak?

True. No Anabaptist ever railed with the like license; but mark her language in the mean time, I beseech you.

Mrs. Ott. Gentlemen, you are very aptly come. My cousin, Sir Amorous, will be here briefly.

True. In good time, lady. Was not Sir John Daw here, to ask for him, and the company?

Mrs. Ott. I cannot assure you, Master Truewit. Here was a very melancholy knight in a ruff, that demanded my subject for somebody, a gentleman, I think.

Cler. Ay, that was he, lady.

Mrs. Ott. But he departed straight, I can resolve you.

Dauph. What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in!

True. O, sir, she is the only authentical courtier, that is not naturally bred one, in the city.

Mrs. Ott. You have taken that report upon trust, gentlemen.

True. No, I assure you, the court governs it so, lady, in your behalf.

Mrs. Ott. I am the servant of the court and courtiers, sir.

True. They are rather your idolaters.

Mrs. Ott. Not so, sir.

(Enter Cutbeard.)

Dauph. How now, Cutbeard! any cross?

Cut. O, no, sir, *omnia bene*. 'Twas never better on the hinges; all's sure. I have so pleased him with a curate, that he's gone to 't almost with the delight he hopes for soon.

Dauph. What is he for a vicar?

Cut. One that has catch'd a cold, sir, and can scarce be heard six inches off; as if he spoke out of a bulrush that were not picked, or his throat were full of pith; a fine quick fellow, and an excellent barber of prayers. I came to tell you, sir, that you might *omnem movere lapidem*, as they say, be ready with your vexation.

Dauph. Gramercy, honest Cutbeard! be thereabouts with thy key, to let us in.

Cut. I will not fail you, sir; *ad manum*. [Exit.]

True. Well, I'll go watch my coachcs.

Cler. Do; and we'll send Daw to you, if you meet him not.

[Exit Truewit.]

Mrs. Ott. Is Master Truewit gone?

Dauph. Yes, lady, there is some unfortunate business fallen out.

Mrs. Ott. So I judged by the physiognomy of the fellow that came in; and I had a dream last night too of the new pageant, and my Lady Mayoress, which is always very ominous to me. I told it my Lady Haughty t'other day, when her honour came hither to see some China stuffs, and she expounded it out of Artemidorus, and I have found it since very true. It has done me many affronts.

Cle. Your dream, lady?

Mrs. Ott. Yes, sir, anything I do but dream of the city.

It stained me a damask table-cloth, cost me eighteen pound, at one time ; and burnt me a black satin gown, as I stood by the fire at my Lady Centaurc's chamber in the college, another time. A third time, at 'the lords' masque, it dropped all my wire and my ruff with wax candle, that I could not go up to the banquet. A fourth time, as I was taking coach to go to Ware, to meet a friend, it dashed me a new suit all over (a crimson satin doublet and black velvet skirts) with a brewcr's horse, that I was fain to go in and shift me, and kept my chamber a leash of days for the anguish of it.

Dauph. Thesc were dire mischances, lady.

Cler. I would not dwell in the city an 'twere so fatal to me.

Mrs. Ott. Yes, sir, but I do take advice of my doctor to dream of it as little as I can.

Dauph. You do well, Mistress Otter.

(Enter Daw, and is taken aside by Clerimont.)

Mrs. Ott. Will it please you to enter the house farther, gentlemen ?

Dauph. And your favour, lady ; but we stay to speak with a knight, Sir John Daw, who is here come. We shall follow you, lady.

Mrs. Ott. At your own time, sir. It is my cousin Sir Amorous his feast—

Dauph. I know it, lady.

Mrs. Ott. And mine together. But it is for his honour, and therefore I take no name of it, more than of the place.

Dauph. You are a bounteous kinswoman.

Mrs. Ott. Your servant, sir. [Exit.]

Cler. [Coming forward with Daw.] Why, do you not know it, Sir John Daw ?

Daw. No, I am a rook if I do.

Cler. I'll tell you then ; she's marrid by this time. And wheras you were put in the head, that she was gone with Sir Dauphine, I assure you Sir Dauphine has been the noblest, honestest friend to you, that ever gent'eman

of your quality could boast of. He has discovered the whole plot, and made your mistress so acknowledging, and indeed so ashamed of her injury to you, that she desires you to forgive her, and but grace her wedding with your presence to-day. She is to be married to a very good fortune, she says, his uncle, old Morose ; and she will'd me in private to tell you, that she shall be able to do you more favours, and with more security now than before.

Daw. Did she say so, i' faith ?

Cler. Why what do you think of me, Sir John ! Ask Sir Dauphine.

Daw. Nay, I believe you.—Good Sir Dauphine, did she desire me to forgive her ?

Dauph. I assure you, Sir John, she did.

Daw. Nay, then, I do with all my heart, and I'll be jovial.

Cler. Yes, for look you, sir, this was the injury to you. La-Foole intended this feast to honour her bridal day, and made you the property to invite the college ladies, and promise to bring her ; and then at the time she would have appeared, as his friend, to have given you the dor. Whereas now, Sir Dauphine has brought her to a feeling of it, with this kind of satisfaction, that you shall bring all the ladies to the place where she is, and be very jovial ; and there she will have a dinner, which shall be in your name ; and so disappoint La-Foole, to make you good again, and, as it were, a saver in the main.

Daw. As I am a knight, I honour her ; and forgive her heartily.

Cler. About it then presently. Truewit is gone before to confront the coaches, and to acquaint you with so much, if he meet you. Join with him, and 'tis well.

(Enter Sir Amorous La-Foole.)

See ; here comes your antagonist ; but take you no notice, but be very jovial.

La-F. Are the ladies come Sir John Daw, and your

True. Sure, he cannot but go to a place of rest, after all this purgatory.

Cler. He may presume it, I think.

True. The spitting, the coughing, the laughter, the sneezing, dancing, noise of the music, and her masculine and loud commanding, and urging the whole family, makes him think he has married a fury.

Cler. And she carries it up bravely.

True. Ay, she takes any occasion to speak: that's the height on 't.

Cler. And how soberly Dauphine labours to satisfy him, that it was none of his plot!

True. And has almost brought him to the faith, in the article. Here he comes—

(Enter Sir Dauphine.)

Where is he now? What's become of him, Dauphine?

Dauph. O, hold me up a little, I shall go away in the jest else. He has got on his whole nest of night-caps, and locked himself up in the top of the house, as high as ever he can climb from the noise. I peeped in at a cranny, and saw him sitting over a cross-beam of the roof, like him on the saddler's horse in Fleet Street, upright; and he will sleep there.

Cler. But where are your collegiates?

Dauph. Withdrawn with the bride in private.

True. O, they are instructing her in the college grammar. If she have grace with them, she knows all their secrets instantly.

Cler. Methinks the Lady Haughty looks well to-day, for all my dispraise of her in the morning. I think I shall come about to thee again, Truewit.

True. Believe it, I told you right. Women ought to repair the losses time and years have made in their features, with dressings. And an intelligent woman, if she know by herself the least defect, will be most curious to hide it:

and it becomes her. If she be short, let her sit much, lest, when she stands, she be thought to sit. If she have an ill foot, let her wear her gown the longer, and her shoe the thinner. If a fat hand and scald nails, let her carve the less, and act in gloves. If she have black and rugged teeth, let her offer the less at laughter, especially if she laugh wide and open.

Cler. O, you shall have some women, when they laugh, you would think they brayed, it is so rude and—

True. Ay, and others, that will stalk in their gait like an estrich, and take huge strides. I cannot endure such a sight. I love measure in the feet, and number in the voice : they are gentlenesses that oftentimes draw no less than the face.

Dauph. How camest thou to study these creatures so exactly ? I would thou wouldest make me a proficient.

True. Good faith, I should rather question you, that are so hearkening after these mysteries. I begin to suspect your diligence, Dauphine. Speak, art thou in love in earnest ?

Dauph. Yes, by my troth, am I : 'twere ill dissembling before thee.

True. With which of them, I prithee ?

Dauph. With all the collegiates.

Cler. Out on thee !

True. No, I like him well. Men should love wisely. and all women. Thou wouldest think it strange, if I should make them all in love with thee afore night !

Dauph. I would say, thou hadst the best philtre in the world, and could do more than Madam Medea, or Doctor Foreman.

True. If I do not, let me play the mountebank for my meat while I live, and the rogue for my drink.

Dauph. So be it, I say.

(Enter Otter, with his three cups, Daw, and La-Foole.)

Ott. O lord² gentlemen, how my knights and I have
mist you here!

Cler. Why, Captain, what service, what service?

Ott. To see me bring up my bull, bear, and horse to
fight.

Daw. Yes, faith, the Captain says we shall be his dogs
to bait them.

Dauph. A good employment.

True. Come on, let's see your course, then.

La-F. I am afraid my cousin will be offended, if she
come.

Ott. Be afraid of nothing.—Gentlemen, I have placed
the drum and the trumpets, and one to give them the sign
when you are ready. Here's my bull for myself, and my
bear for Sir John Daw, and my horse for Sir Amorous.
Now set your foot to mine, and yours to his, and—

La-F. Pray God my cousin come not.

Ott. St. George and St. Andrew, fear no cousins. Come,
sound, sound! [Drum and trumpets sound.] *Et rauco
strepuerunt cornua cantu.*

[They drink.]

True. Well said, Captain, i' faith; well fought at the
bull.

Cler. Well held at the bear.

True. Low, low! Captain.

Dauph. O, the horse has kicked off his dog already.

La-F. I cannot drink it, as I am a knight.

True. Ods so, off with his spurs, somebody.

La-F. It goes against my conscience. My cousin will
be angry with it.

Daw. I have done mine.

True. You fought high and fair, Sir John.

Cler. At the head.

Dauph. Like an excellent bear-dog.

Cler. You take no notice of the business, I hope?

Daw. Not a word, sir; you see we are jovial.

Ott. Sir Amorous, you must not equivocate. It must be pulled down, for all my cousin.

Cler. 'Sfoot, if you take not your drink, they'll think you are discontented with something; you'll betray all, if you take the least notice.

La-F. Not I; I'll both drink and talk then.

Ott. You must pull the horse on his knees, Sir Amorous; fear no cousins. *Jacta est alea.*

True. O, now he's in his vein and bold; the least hint given him of his wife now, will make him rail desperately.

Cler. Speak to him of her.

True. Do you, and I'll fetch her to the hearing of it.

[*Exit.*]

Dauph. Captain He-Otter, your She-Otter is coming, your wife.

Ott. Wife! buzz! *titivilitium!* There's no such thing in nature. I confess, gentleman, I have a cook, a laundress, a house drudge, that serves my necessary turns, and goes under that title; but he's an ass that will be so uxorious to tie his affections to one circle. Come, the name dulls appetite. Here, replenish again; another bout. [*Fills the cups again.*] Wives are nasty, sluttish animals.

Dauph. O, Captain.

Ott. As ever the earth bare, *tribus verbis*.—Where's Master Truewit?

Daw. He's slipt aside, sir.

Cler. But you must drink and be jovial.

Daw. Yes, give it me.

La-F. And me too.

Daw. Let's be jovial.

La-F. As jovial as you will.

Ott. Agreed. Now, you shall have the bear, cousin, and Sir John Daw the horse, and I'll have the bull still. Sound, Tritons of the Thames! [*Drum and trumpets sound again.*] *Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero*—

Mor. [above].. Villains, murderers, sons of the earth, and traitors, what do you there?

Cler. O, now the trumpets have waked him, we shall have his company.

Ott. A wife is a scurvy clogdogdo, an unlucky thing, a very foresaid bear-whelp, without any good fashion or breeding, *mala bestia*.

(*Re-enter Truewit behind, with Mistress Otter.*)

Dauph. Why did you marry one then, Captain?

Ott. A pox! I married with six thousand pound, I, I was in love with that. I have not kissed my Fury these forty weeks.

Cler. The more to blame you, Captain.

True. Nay, Mistress Otter, hear him a little first.

Ott. She has a peruke that's like a pound of hemp, made up in shoe threads.

Mrs. Ott. O, viper, mandrake.

Ott. A most vile face! and yet she spends me forty pound a year in mercury and hogs-bones. All her teeth were made in the Blackfriars, both her eye-brows in the Strand, and her hair in Silver Street. Every part of the town owns a piece of her.

Mrs. Ott. [Comes forward.] I cannot hold.

Ott. She takes herself asunder still when she goes to bed, into some twenty boxes; and about next day noon is put together again, like a grcat German clock; and so comes forth, and reads a tedious larum to the whole house, and then is quiet again for an hour, but for her quarters.—Have you done me right, gentlemen?

Mrs. Ott. [Falls upon him and beats him.] No, sir, I'll do you right, with my quarters, with my quarters.

Ott. O, hold, good Princess!

True. Sound, sound.

[*Drum and trumpets sound.*]

Cler. A battle! A battle!

Mrs. Ott. You notoriously, stinkardly bearward.

Ott. Under correction, dear princess. Look to my bear and my horse, gentlemen.

Mrs. Ott. Do I want teeth, and eyebrows, then bulldog?

True. Sound, sound still!

[They sound again.]

Ott. No, I protest, under correction—

Mrs. Ott. Ay, now you are under correction, you protest; but you did not protest before correction, sir. Thou Judas, to offer to betray thy princess! I'll make thee an example—

[Beats him.]

(Enter Morose with his long sword.)

Mor. I will have no such examples in my house, Lady Otter.

Mrs. Ott. Ah!—

[*Mrs. Ott., Daw and La-Foole run off.*]

Mor. Mistress Mary Ambree, your examples are dangerous.—Rogues, hell-hounds, Stentors! out of my doors, you sons of noise and tumult!

[Drives out the Musicians.]

Dauph. What ails you, sir?

Mor. They have rent my roof, walls, and all my windows asunder with their brazen throats.

[Exit.]

True. Best follow him, Dauphine.

Dauph. So I will.

[Exit.]

Cler. Where's Daw and La-Foole?

Ott. They are both run away, sir. Good gentlemen, help to pacify my princess, and speak to the great ladies for me. Now must I go lie with the bears this fortnight, and keep out of the way, till my peace be made, for this scandal she has taken. Did you not see my bull-head, gentlcmen?

Cler. Is 't not on, Captain?

Ott. O, here it is. An you come over, gentlemen, and ask for Tom Otter, we'll go down to Ratcliff, and have a course i' faith, for all these disasters. There is *bona spes* left.

True. Away, Captain, get off while you are well.

[*Exit Otter.*

Cler. I am glad we are rid of him.

True. You had never been unless we had put his wife upon him. His humour is as tedious at last, as it was ridiculous at first.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A long open gallery, in the same.

(Enter *Lady Haughty*, *Mistress Otter*, *Mavis*, *Daw*, *La-Foole*, *Centaure* and *Epicæne*.)

Hau. We wondered why you shriek'd so, Mistress Otter.

Mrs. Ott. O lord, madam, he came down with a huge long naked weapon in both his hands, and looked so dreadfully ! Sure he's beside himself.

Mav. Why, what made you thare, Mistress Otter ?

Mrs. Ott. Alas, Mistress Mavis, I was chastising my subject, and thought nothing of him.

Daw. Faith, mistress, you must do so too ; learn to chastise. Mistress Otter corrects her husband so, he dares not speak, but under correction.

La-F. And with his hat off to her ; 'twould do you good to see.

Hau. In sadness, 'tis good and mature counsel ; practise it, Morose. I'll call you Morose still now, as I call Centaure and Mavis ; we four will be all one.

Cen. And you'll come to the College, and live with us ?

Hau. Make him give milk and honey.

Mav. Look how you manage him at first, you shall have him ever after.

Cen. Let him allow you your coach, and four horses,

your woman, your chamber-maid, your page, your gentleman-usher, your French cook, and four grooms.

Hau. And go with us to Bedlam, to the china houses, and to the exchange.

Cen. It will open the gate to your fame.

Hau. Here's Centaure has immortalised herself, with taming of her wild male.

Mav., Ay, she has done the miracle of the kingdom.

(Enter Morose and Dauphine.)

Mor. O my cursed angel, that instructed me to this fate!

Dauph. Why, sir?

Mor. That I should be seduced by so foolish a devil as a barber will make!

Dauph. I would I had been worthy, sir, to have partaken your counsel; you should never have trusted it to such a minister.

Mor. Would I could redeem it with the loss of an eye, nephew, a hand, or any other member—

(Enter Cler. and True.)

— So it would rid me of her! and that I did superecclesiastical penance in a belfry, at Westminster Hall, in the Cock-pit, at the fall of a stag, the Tower Wharf—what place is there else?—London-Bridge, Paris-garden, Billingsgate, when the noises are at their height and loudest. Nay, I would sit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet and target.

Dauph. I hope there shall be no such need, sir. Take patience, good uncle; this is but a day, and 'tis well worn too now.

Mor. O, 'twill be so for ever, nephew, I foresee it, for ever. Strife and tumult are the dowry that comes with a wife.

True. I told you so, sir, and you would not believe me.

Mor. Alas, do not rub those wounds, Master Truewit, to blood again; 'twas my negligence. Add not affliction

to affliction. I have perceived the effect of it too late in Madam Otter.

Epi. How do you, sir ?

Mor. Did you ever hear a more unnecessary question ? As if she did not see ! Why, I do as you see, empress, empress.

Epi. You are not well, sir ; you look very ill ; something has distempered you.

Mor. O horrible, monstrous impertinencies ! Would not one of these have served, do you think, sir ? would not one of these have served ?

True. Yes, sir ; but these are but notes of female kindness, sir ; certain tokens that she has a voice, sir.

Mor. O, is it so ? Come, an 't be no otherwise—what say you ?

Epi. How do you feel yourself, sir ?

Mor. Again that !

True. Nay, look you, sir, you would be friends with your wife upon unconscionable terms ; her silence.

Epi. They say you are run mad, sir.

Mor. Not for love, I assure you, of you ; do you see ?

Epi. O Lord, gentlemen ! lay hold on him, for God's sake. What shall I do ? Who's his physician, can you tell, that knows the state of his body best, that I might send for him ? Good sir, speak ; I'll send for one of my doctors else.

Mor. What, to poison me, that I might die intestate, and leave you possest of all !

Epi. Lord, how idly he talks, and how his eyes sparkle ! he looks green about the temples ! do you see what blue spots he has ?

Cler. Ay, 'tis melancholy.

Epi. Gentlemen, for heaven's sake counsel me. Ladies —servant, you have read Pliny and Paracelsus ; ne'er a word now to comfort a poor gentlewoman ? Ah me, what fortune had I to marry a distracted man !

Daw. I'll tell you, mistress——.

True. [aside to *Cler.*] How rarely she holds it up !

Mor. What mean you, gentlemen ?

Epi. What will you tell me, servant ?

Daw. The disease in Greek is called *mania*, in Latin *insania*, *furor*, *vel ecstasis melancholica*, that is *egressio*, when a man *ex melancholico evadit fanaticus*.

Mor. Shall I have a lecture read upon me alive ?

Daw. But he may be but *phreneticus* yet, mistress ; and *phrenesis* is only *delirium*, or so.

Epi. Ay, that is for the disease, servant ; but what is this to the cure ? We are sure enough of the disease.

Mor. Let me go !

True. Why, we'll entreat her to hold her peace, sir.

Mor. O no, labour not to stop her ; she is like a conduit-pipe, that will gush out with more force when she opens again.

Hau. I'll tell you, Morose, you must talk divinity to him altogether, or moral philosophy.

La-F. Ay, and there's an excellent book of moral philosophy madam, of Reynard the Fox, and all the beasts, called Doni's Philosophy.

Cen. There is indeed, Sir Amorous La-Foole.

Mor. O misery !

La-F. I have read it, my Lady Centaure, all over, to my cousin here.

Mrs. Ott. Ay, and 'tis a very good book as any is, of the moderns.

Daw. Tut, he must have Seneca read to him, and Plutarch, and the ancients ; the moderns are not for this disease.

Cler. Why, you discommended them too to-day, Sir John.

Daw. Ay, in some cases ; but in these they are best, and Aristotle's Ethics.

Mav. Say you so, Sir John ? I think you are deceived ; you took it upon trust.

Hau. Where's Trusty, my woman ? I'll end this difference. I prithee, Otter, call her. Her⁴ father and mother were both mad, when they put her to me.

Mor. I think so. Nay, gentlemen, I am tame. This is but an exercise, I know, a marriage ceremony, which I must endure.

Hau. And one of them, I know not which, was cured with the Sick Man's Salve, and the other with Green's Groatsworth of Wit.

True. A very cheap cure, madam.

(Enter Trusty.)

Hau. Ay, 'tis very feasible.

' *Mrs. Ott.* My lady call'd for you, Mistress Trusty ; you must decide a controversy.

Hau. O, Trusty, which was it you said, your father, or your mother, that was cured with the Sick Man's Salve ?

Trus. My mother, madam, with the salve.

True. Then it was the sick woman's salve ?

Trus. And my father with the Groatsworth of Wit. But there was other means used ; we had a preacher that would preach folk asleep still ; and so they were prescribed to go to church, by an old woman that was their physician, thrice a week—

Epi. To sleep ?

Trus. Yes, forsooth ; and every night they read themselves asleep on those books.

Epi. Good faith, it stands with great reason. I would I knew where to procure those books.

Mor. Oh !

La-F. I can help you with one of them, Mistress Morose, the Groatsworth of Wit.

Epi. But I shall disfurnish you, Sir Amorous, can you spare it ?

La-F. O yes, for a week or so ; I'll read it myself to him.

Epi. No, I must do that, sir ; that must be my office.

Mor. Oh ! Oh !

Epi. Sure he would do well enough, if he could sleep.

Mor. No, I should do well enough if you could sleep. Have I no friend that will make her drunk, or give her a little laudanum, or opium ?

True. Why, sir, she talks ten times worse in her sleep.

Mor. How !

Cler. Do you not know that, sir ? Never ceases all night.

True. And snores like a porpoise.

Mor. "O redeem me, fate ; redeem me, fate ! For how many causes may a man be divorced, nephew ?

Dauph. I know not truly, sir.

True. Some divine must resolve you in that, sir, or canon-lawyer.

Mor. I will not rest, I will not think of any hope or comfort, till I know.

[*Exit with Dauphine.*

Cler. Alas, poor man !

True. You'll make him mad indeed, ladies, if you pursue this.

Hau. No, we'll let him breathe now, a quarter of an hour or so.

Cler. By my faith, a large truce !

Hau. Is that his keeper, that is gone with him ?

Daw. It is his nephew, madam.

La-F. Sir Dauphine Eugenie.

Cen. He looks like a very pitiful knight.

Daw. As can be. This marriage has put him out of all.

La-F. He has not a penny in his purse, madam.

Daw. He is ready to cry all this day

La-F. A very shark ; he set me in the nick t'other night at Primero.

True. How these swabbers talk !

Cler. Ay, Otter's wine has swell'd their humours above a springtide.

Hau. Good Morose, let's go in again. I like your couches exceeding well ; we'll go lie and talk there.

[*Exeunt Hau., Cen., Mav., Trus., La-F., and Daw.*]

Epi. [following them]. I wait on you, madam.

True. [stopping her]. 'Slight, I will have them as silent as signs, and their post too, ere I have done. Do you hear, lady-bride ? I pray thee now, as thou art a noble wench, continue this discourse of Dauphine within ; but praise him exceedingly : magnify him with all the height of affection thou canst ;—I have some purpose in 't : and but beat off these two rooks, Jack Daw and his fellow, with any discontentment hither, and I'll honour thee for ever.

Epi. I was about it here. It angered me to the soul, to hear them begin to talk so malepert.

True. Pray thee perform it, and thou winn'st me an idolater to thee everlasting.

Epi. Will you go in and hear me do 't ?

True. No, I'll stay here. Drive them out of your company, 'tis all I ask ; which cannot be any way better done, than by extolling Dauphine, whom they have so slighted.

Epi. I warrant you ; you shall expect one of them prcsently.

[*Exit.*]

Cler. What a cast of kestrils are these, to hawk after ladies, thus !

True. Ay, and strike at such an eagle as Dauphine.

Cler. He will be mad when we tell him. Here he comes.

(*Re-enter Dauphine.*)

Cler. O sir, you are welcome.

True. Where's thine uncle ?

Dauph. Run out of doors in his night-caps, to talk with a casuist about his divorce. It works admirably.

True. Thou wouldest have said so, an thou hadst been here ; the ladies have laugh'd at thee most comically, since thou went'st, Dauphine.

Cler. And ask'd if thou wert thine uncle's keeper.

True. And the brace of baboons answcred, Yes ; and said thou wert a pitiful poor fellow, and didst live upon posts, and hadst nothing but three suits of apparel, and some few benevolences that the lords gave thee to fool to them, and swagger.

Dauph. Let me not live, I'll beat them ; I'll bind them both to grand-madam's bed-posts, and have them baited with mosekeys.

True. Thou shalt not need, they shall be beaten to thy hand, Dauphine. I have an execution to serve upon them, I warrant thee, shall serve ; trust my plot.

Dauph. Ay, you have many plots ! so you had one to make all the wenches in love with me.

True. Why, if I do it not yet afore night, as near as 'tis, take the mortgage of my wit.

Cler. 'Fore God, I'll be his witness, thou shalt have it, Dauphine ; thou shalt be his fool for ever, if thou dost not.

True. Agreed. Perhaps 'twill be the better estate. Do you observe this gallery, or rather lobby, indeed ? Here are a couple of studies, at each end one ; here will I act such a tragi-comedy between the Guelphs, and the Ghibellines, Daw and La-Foole—which of them comes out first, will I seize on ;—you two shall be the chorus behind the arras, and whip out between the acts and speak—If I do not make them keep the peace for this remnant of the day, if not of the year, I have failed once—I hear Daw coming ; hide [*they withdraw*] and do not laugh, for God's sake.

(Re-enter Daw.)

Daw. Which is the way into the garden, trow ?

True. O, Jack Daw ! I am glad I have met with you.

In good faith, I must have this matter go no further between you : I must have it taken up.

Daw. What matter, sir ? between whom ?

True. Come, you disguise it ; Sir Amorous and you. If you love me, Jack, you shall make use of your philosophy now, for this once, and deliver me your sword. [Takes his sword.] The bride has entreated me I will see no blood shed at her bridal : you saw her whisper me ere-while.

Daw. As I hope to finish Tacitus, I intend no murder.

True. Do you not wait for Sir Amorous ?

Daw. Not I, by my knighthood.

True. And your scholarship too ?

Daw. And my scholarship too.

True. Go to, then I return you your sword, and ask you mercy, but put it not up, for you will be assaulted. I understood that you had apprehended it, and walked here to brave him ; and that you had held your life contemptible in regard of your honour.

Daw. No, no ; no such thing, I assure you. He and I parted now, as good friends as could be.

True. Trust not you to that visor. I saw him since dinner with another face : I have known many men in my time vexed with losses, with deaths, and with abuses ; but so offended a wight as Sir Amorous, did I never see or read of. For taking away his guests, sir, to-day, that's the cause ; and he declares it behind your back, with such threatenings and contempts—He said to Dauphine you were the arrant'st ass—

Daw. Ay, he may say his pleasure.

True. And swears you are so protested a coward, that he knows you will never do him any manly or single right ; and therefore he will take his course.

Daw. I'll give him any satisfaction, sir—but fighting.

True. Ay, sir, but who knows what satisfaction he'll take ; blood he thirsts for, and blood he will have ; and whereabouts on you he will have it, who knows but himself ?

Daw. I pray you, Master Truewit, be you a mediator.

True. Well, sir, conceal yourself then in this study till I return. [Puts him into the study.] Nay, you must be content to be locked in ; for, for mine own reputation, I would not have you seen to receive a public disgrace, while I have the matter in managing. Ods so, here he comes ; keep your breath close, that he do not hear you sigh. In good faith, Sir Amorous, he is not this way ; I pray you be merciful, do not murder him ; he is a Christian, as good as you ; you are arm'd as if you sought revenge on all his race. Good, Dauphine, get him away from this place. I never knew a man's choler so high, but he would speak to his friends, he would hear reason—Jack Daw, Jack ! asleep !

Daw [within]. Is he gone, Master Truewit ?

True. Ay ; did you hear him ?

Daw. O lord, yes.

True. What a quick ear fear has !

Daw. [Comes out of the closet.] But is he so armed, as you say ?

True. Armed ! did you ever see a fellow set out to take possession ?

Daw. Ay, sir.

True. That may give you some light to conceive of him ; but 'tis nothing to the principal. Some false brother in the house has furnished him strangely ; or if it were out of the house, it was Tom Otter.

Daw. Indeed he's a Captain, and his wife is his kinswoman.

True. He has got somebody's old two-hand sword, to mow you off at the knees ; and that sword hath spawn'd such a dagger !—But then he is so hung with pikes, halberds, petronels, rapiers, and muskets, that he looks like a justice of peace's hall ; a man of two thousand a year is not cessed at so many weapons as he has on. There was never fencer challenged at so many several foils. You would think he

meant to murder all St. Pulchre's parish. If he could but victual himself for half a year, in his breeches, he is sufficiently armed to over-run a country.

Daw. Good lord, what means he, sir ? I pray you, Master Truewit, be you a mediator.

True. Well, I'll try if he will be appeased with a leg or an arm ; if not, you must die once.

Daw. I would be loth to lose my right arm, for writing madrigals.

True. Why, if he will be satisfied with a thumb, or a little finger, all's one to me : you must think, I'll do my best.

[*Shuts him up again.*

Daw. Good sir, do.

[*Cler. and Dauph. come forward.*

Cler. What hast thou done ?

True. He will let me do nothing, he does all afore ; he offers his left arm.

Cler. His left wing, for a Jack Daw.

Dauph. Take it by all means.

True. How ! maim a man for ever, for a jest ! What a conscience hast thou !

Dauph. 'Tis no loss to him ; he has no employment for his arms but to eat spoon meat. Beside, as good maim his body as his reputation.

True. He is a scholar, and a wit, and yet he does not think so. But he loses no reputation with us, for we all resolved him an ass before. To your places again.

Cler. I pray thee, let me be in at the other a little.

True. Look, you'll spoil all ; these be ever your tricks.

Cler. No but I could hit of some things that thou wilt miss, and thou wilt say are good ones.

True. I warrant you. I pray, forbear, I'll leave it off else.

Dauph. Come away, Clerimont.

[*Dauph. and Cler. withdraw as before.*

(Enter La-Foole.)

True. Sir Amorous !

La-F. Master Truewit.

True. Whither were you going ?

La-F. Down into the court.

True. By no means, sir.

La-F. Why, sir ?

True. Enter here, if you love your life.

[Opening the door of the other study.]

La-F. Why ? why ?

True. Question till your throat be cut, do : dally till the enraged soul find you.

La-F. Who is that ?

True. Daw it is : will you in ?

La-F. Ay, ay, I'll in ; what's the matter ?

True. Nay, if he had been cool enough to tell us that, there had been some hope, to atone you ; but he seems so implacably enraged !

La-F. 'Slight, let him rage ! I'll hide myself.

True. Do, good sir. But what have you done to him within, that should provoke him thus ? You have broke some jest upon him before the ladies.

La-F. Not I, never in my life broke jest upon any man. The bride was praising Sir Dauphine, and he went away in snuff, and I followed him ; unless he took offence at me, in his drink erewhile, that I would not pledge all the horse full.

True. By my faith, and that may be ; you remember well ; but he walks the round up and down, through every room o' the house, with a towel in his hand, crying, "Where's La-Foole ? Who saw La-Foole ?" And when Dauphine and I demanded the cause, we can force no answer from him, but—"O revenge, how sweet art thou ! I will strangle him in this towel"—which leads us to conjecture that the main cause of his fury is for bringing your meat to-day, with a towel about you, to his discredit.

La-F. Like enough. Why, an he be angry for that, I'll stay here till his anger be blown over.

True. A good becoming resolution, sir ; if you can put it on o' the sudden.

La-F. Yes, I can put it on ; or, I'll away into the country presently.

True. How will you go out of the house, sir ? He knows you are in the house, and he'll watch this se'ennight, but he'll have you ; he'll outwait a serjeant for you.

La-F. Why, then I'll stay here.

True. You must think how to victual yourself in time then.

La-F. Why, sweet Master Truewit, will you entreat my cousin Otter to send me a cold venison pasty, a bottle or two of winc, and a pallat to lie on.

True. O, I would not advise you to sleep by any means.

La-F. Would you not, sir ? Why, then I will not.

True. Yet, there's another fear.

La-F. Is there, sir ? What is 't ?

True. No, he cannot break open this door with his foot, sure.

La-F. I'll set my back against it, sir. I have a good back.

True. But then, if he should batter.

La-F. Batter ! if he dare, I'll have an action of battery against him.

True. Cast you the worst. He has sent for powder already, and what he will do with it, no man knows ; perhaps blow up the corner of the house where he suspects you are. Here he comes ; in quickly. [*Thrusts in La-F. and shuts the door.*]—I protest Sir John Daw, he is not this way ; what will you do ? Before God you shall hang no petard here : I'll die rather. Will you not take my word ? I never knew one but would be satisfied. [*Speaks through the keyhole.*] Sir Amorous, there's no standing out : he has made a petard of an old brass pot, to force

your door. Think upon some satisfaction, or terms to offer him.

La-F. Sir, I'll give him any satisfaction : I dare give any terms.

True. You'll leave it to me then ?

La-F. Ay, sir ; I'll stand to any conditions.

True. [Beckoning forward *Cler.* and *Dauph.*] How now, what think you, sirs ? Were 't not a difficult thing to determine, which of these two fear'd most.

Cler. Yes, but this fears the bravest ; the other a whining dastard, Jack Daw ! But La-Fool, a brave heroic coward ! and is afraid in a great look, and a stout accent ; I like him rarely.

True. Had it not been pity these two should have been concealed ?

Cler. Shall I make a motion ?

True. Briefly ; for I must strike while 'tis hot.

Cler. Shall I go fetch the ladies to the catastrophe ?

True. Umph ! ay, by my troth.

Dauph. By no mortal means. Let them continue in the state of ignorance, and err still ; think them wits and fine fellows, as they have done. 'Twere sin to reform them.

True. Well, I will have them fetch'd, now I think on't, for a private purpose of mine : do, Clerimont, fetch them, and discourse to them all that's past, and bring them into the gallery here.

Dauph. This is thy extreme vanity, now : thou thinkst thou wert undone, if every jest thou mak'st were not published.

True. Thou shalt see how unjust thou art presently. Clerimont, say it was Dauphine's plot. [Exit Clerimont. Trust me not if the whole drift be not for thy good. There is a carpet, in the next room ; put it on, with this scarf over thy face, and a cushion on thy head, and be ready when I call Amorous. Away ! [Exit *Dauph.*] John Daw !

[Goes to Daw's closet and brings him out.]

Daw. What good news, sir?

True. Faith, I have followed and argued with him hard for you. I told him you were a knight, and a scholar, and that you knew fortitude did consist *magis patiendo quam faciendo, magis ferendo quam feriendo.*

Daw. It doth so indeed, sir.

True. And that you would suffer, I told him; so at first he demanded by my troth, in my conceit, too' much.

Daw. What was it, sir?

True. Your upper lip, and six of your fore teeth.

Daw. 'Twas unreasonable.

True. Nay, I told him plainly you could not spare them all. So after long argument, *pro et con*, as you know, I brought him down to your two butter teeth, and them he would have.

Daw. O, did you so? Why, he shall have them.

True. But he shall not, sir, by your leave. The conclusion is this, sir; because you shall be very good friends hereafter, and this never to be remembered, or upbraided; besides, that he may not boast he has done any such thing to you in his own person; he is to come here in disguise, give you five kicks in private, sir, take your sword from you, and lock you up in that study during pleasure; which will be but a little while, we'll get it released presently.

Daw. Five kicks! He shall have six, sir, to be friends.

True. Believe me, you shall not overshoot yourself, to send him that word by me.

Daw. Deliver it, sir; he shall have it with all my heart, to be friends.

True. Friends! Nay, an he should not be so and heartily too, upon these terms, he shall have me to enemy while I live. Come, sir, bear it bravely.

Daw. O lord, sir, 'tis nothing.

True. True: what's six kicks to a man that reads Seneca?

Daw. I have had a hundred, sir.

True. Sir Amorous !

(*Re-enter Dauphine, disguised.*)

No speaking one to another, or rchearsing old matters.

Daw. [As *Dauphine* kicks him] One, two, three, four, five. I protest, Sir Amorous, you shall have six.

True. Nay, I told you, you should not talk. Come, give him six, an he will needs. [*Dauph.* kicks him again.] Your sword.—[Takes his sword.] Now return to your safe custody ; you shall presently meet afore the ladies, and be the dearest friends one to another. [Puts *Daw* into the study.] Give me the scarf now, thou shalt beat the other bare-faced. Stand by ; [*Dauph.* retires, and *Truewit* goes to the other closet and releases *La-Foole*.]—Sir Amorous !

La-F. What's here ! A sword ?

True. I cannot help it, without I should take the quarrel upon myself. Here he has sent you his sword —

La-F. I'll reccive none on 't.

True. And he wills you to fasten it against a wall, and break your head in some few severall places against the hilts.

La-F. I will not ; tell him roundly. I cannot endure to shed my own blood.

True. Will you not ?

La-F. No. I'll beat it against a fair flat wall, if that will satisfy him : if not, he shall beat it himself, for Amorous.

True. Why, this is strange starting off, when a man undertakes for you ! I offered him another condition ; will you stand to that ?

La-F. Ay, what is 't ?

True. That you will be beaten in private.

La-F. Yes, I am content, at the blunt.

(Enter, above, *Haughty*, *Centaure*, *Mavis*, *Mistress Otter*, *Epicane*, and *Trusty*.)

True. Then you must submit yourself to be hood-winked in this scarf, and be led to him, where he will take

your sword from you, and make you bear a blow over the mouth, *gules*, and tweaks by the nose *sans nombre*.

La-F. I am content; but why must I be blinded?

True. That's for your good, sir; because if he should grow insolent upon this, and publish it hereafter to your disgrace (which I hope he will not do), you might swear safely, and protest, he never beat you to your knowledge.

La-F. O, I conceive.

True. I do not doubt but you'll be perfect good friends upon 't, and not dare to utter an ill thought one of another in future.

La-F. Not I, as God help me, of him.

True. Nor he of you, sir. If he should—[binds his eyes] Come, sir. [leads him forward.] All hid, Sir John.

(Enter Dauphine and tweaks his nose.)

La-F. O, Sir John, Sir John! Oh, o-o-o-o-o—Oh—

True. Good Sir John, leave tweaking, you'll blow his nose off.—'Tis Sir John's pleasure you should retire into the study. [Puts him up again.]—Why, now you are friends. All bitterness between you I hope is buried; you shall come forth by and by Damon and Pythias upon 't, and embrace with all the rankness of friendship that can be.—I trust we shall have them tamer in their language hereafter. Dauphine, I worship thee.—God's will, the ladies have surprised us!

(Enter Haughty, Centaire, Mavis, Mistress Otter, Epicœne and Trusty behind.)

Hau. Centaure, how our judgments were imposed on by these adulterate knights.

Cen. Nay, madam, Mavis was more deceived than we; 'twas her commendation utter'd them in the college.

Mav. I commended but their wits, madam, and their braveries. I never look'd toward their valours.

Hau. Sir Dauphine is valiant, and a wit too, it seems.

Mav. And a bravery too.

Hau. Was this his project?

Mrs. Ott. So Master Clerimont intimates, madam.

Hau. Good Morose, when you come to the college, will you bring him with you? He seems a very perfect gentleman.

Epi. He is so, madam, believe it.

Cen. But when will you come, Morose?

Epi. Three or four days hence, madam, when I have got me a coach and horses.

Hau. No, to-morrow, good Morose; Centaure shall send you her coach.

Mav. Yes, faith, do, and bring Sir Dauphine with you.

Hau. She has promised that, Mavis.

Mav. He is a very worthy gentleman, in his exteriors, in' lam.

Cen. And yet not so superlatively neat as some, madam, that have their faces set in a brak.

Hau. Ay, and have every hair in form.

Mav. That wear purer linen than ourselves, and profess more neatness.

Epi. Ay, ladies, they, what they tell one of us, have told a thousand; and are the only thieves of our fame, that think to take us with that perfume, or with that lace, and laugh at us unconscionably when they have done.

Hau. But Sir Dauphine's carelessness becomes him.

Cen. I could love a man for such a nose.

Mav. Or such a leg.

Cen. He has an exceeding good eye, madam.

Mav. And a very good lock.

True. See how they eye thee, man! They are taken I warrant thee.

(*Haughty* comes forward.)

Hau. You have unbraced our brace of knights here, Master Truewit.

True. Not I, madam; it was Sir Dauphine's ingine, who, if he have disfurnished your ladyship of any guard

or service by it, is able to make the place good again in himself.

Hau. There is no suspicion of that, sir.

Mav. Let us go too, and take part. [They come forward.

Hau. But I am glad of the fortune (beside the discovery of two such empty caskets) to gain the knowledge of so rich a mine of virtue as Sir Dauphine.

Cen. We would be all glad to style him of our friendship, and see him at the college.

Mav. He cannot mix with a sweeter society, I'll prophesy; and I hope he himself will think so.

Dauph. I should be rude to imagine otherwise, lady.

True. Did I not tell thee, Dauphine! Why, all their actions are govern'd by crude opinion, without reason or cause; they know not why they do anything; but as they are informed, believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate, and in emulation, one of another, do all these things alike. Only they have a natural inclination sways them generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves. But, pursue it, now thou hast them.

Hau. Shall we go in again, Morose?

Epi. Yes, madam.

Cen. We'll entreat Sir Dauphine's company.

True. Stay, good madam, the interview of the two friends, Pylades and Orestes; I'll fetch them out to you straight.

Hau. Will you, Master Truewit?

Dauph. Ay, but, noble ladies, do not confess in your countenance, or outward bearing to them, any discovery of their follies, that we may see how they will bear up again, with what assurance and erection.

Hau. We will not, Sir Dauphine.

Cen., Mav. Upon our honours, Sir Dauphine.

True. [Goes to the first closet.] Sir Amorous, Sir Amorous! The ladies are here.

La-F. [within]. Are they?

True. Yes, but slip out by and by, as their backs are turned, and meet Sir John here, as by chance, when I call you. [Goes to the other.] Jack Daw !

Daw [within]. What say you, sir ?

True. Whip out behind me suddenly, and no anger in your looks to your adversary. Now, now !

(*La-Foole and Daw slip out of their respective closets, and salute each other.*)

La-F. Noble Sir John Daw ! where have you been ?

Daw. To seek you, Sir Amorous.

La-F. Me ! I honour you.

Daw. I prevent you, sir.

Cler. They have forgot their rapiers.

True. O, they meet in peace, man.

Dauph. Where's your sword, Sir John ?

Cler. And yours, Sir Amorous ?

Daw. Mine ! my boy had it forth to mend the handle, e'en now.

La-F. And my gold handle was broke too, and my boy had it forth.

Dauph. Indeed, sir ! How their excuses meet !

Cler. What a consent there is in the handles !

True. Nay, there is so in the points too, I warrant you. (*Enter Morose with the two swords, drawn, in his hands.*)

Mrs. Ott. O me ! madam, he comes again, the madman ! Away.

[*Ladies, Daw, and La-Foole run off.*

Mor. What make these naked weapons here, gentlemen ?

True. O, sir ! here hath like to have been murder since you went ; a couple of knights fallen out about the bride's favours ! We were fain to take away their weapons ; your house had been begged by this time else.

Mor. For what ?

Cler. For manslaughter, sir, as being accessory.

Mor. And for her favours ?

True. Ay, sir, heretofore, not present.—Clerimont, carry

them their swords now. They have done all the hurt they will do. [Exit Cler. with the two swords.

Dauph. Have you spoke with a lawyer, sir?

Mor. O, no! there is such a noise in the court, that they have frighted me home with more violence than I went! Such speaking and counter-speaking, with their several voices of citations, appellations, allegations, certificates, attachments, interrogatories, references, convictions, and afflictions indeed, among the doctors and proctors, that the noise here is silence to 't, a kind of calm midnight!

True. Why, sir, if you would be resolved indeed, I can bring you hither a very sufficient lawyer, and a learned divine, that shall enquire into every least scruple for you.

Mor. Can you, Master Truewit?

True. Yes, and are very sober, grave persons, that will despatch it in a chamber, with a whisper or two.

Mor. Good sir, shall I hope this benefit from you, and trust myself into your hands?

True. Alas, sir! your nephew and I have been ashamed, and oft-times mad since you went, to think how you are abused. Go in, good sir, and lock yourself up till we call you; we'll tell you more anon, sir.

Mor. Do your pleasure with me, gentlemen; I believe in you, and that deserves no delusion. [Exit.

True. You shall find none, sir;—but heaped, heaped plenty of vexation.

Dauph. What wilt thou do now, Wit?

True. Recover me hither Otter and the barber, if you can, by any means, presently.

Dauph. Why? to what purpose?

True. O, I'll make the deepest divine, and gravest lawyer, out of them two, for him.

Dauph. Thou canst not, man; these are waking dreams.

True. Do not fear me. Clap but a civil gown with a welt on the one, and a canonical cloke with sleeves on the other, and give them a few terms in their mouths, if there

comme not forth as able a doctor, and complete a parson, for this turn, as may be wish'd, trust not my election; and I hope, without wronging the dignity of either profession, since they are but persons put on, and for mirth's sake, to torment him. The barber smatters Latin, I remember.

Dauph. Yes, and Otter too.

True. Well then, if I make them not wrangle out this case to his no comfort, let me be thought a Jack Daw or La-Foole, or anything worse. Go you to your ladies, but first send for them.

Dauph. I will.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V

SCENE I.—A Room in Morose's House.

(Enter *La-Foole, Clerimont and Daw.*)

La-F. Where had you our swords, Master Clerimont?

Cler. Why, Dauphine took them from the madman.

La-F. And he took them from our boys, I warrant you.

Cler. Very like, sir.

La-F. Thank you, good Master Clerimont. Sir John Daw and I are both beholden to you.

Cler. Would I knew how to make you so, gentlemen!

Daw. Sir Amorous and I are your servants, sir.

[*Exeunt Daw and La-Foole.*

(Enter *Dauphine—then Truewit.*)

True. O, are you here? Come, Dauphine; go call your uncle presently: I have fitted my divine and my canonist, dyed their beards and all. The knaves do not know themselves, they are so exalted, and altered. Preferment changes any man. Thou shalt keep one door and I another, and then Clerimont in the midst, that he may have no means of escape from their cavilling, when they grow hot

once again. And then the women, as I have given the bride her instructions, to break in upon him in the l'envoy. O, 'twill be full and twanging ! Away ! fetch him.

[Exit Dauphine.

(Enter Ottier disguised as a divine, and Cutbeard as a canon-lawyer.)

Come, master doctor and master parson, look to your parts now, and discharge them bravely ; you are well set forth, perform it as well. If you chance to be out, do not confess it with standing still, or humming, or gaping one at another ; but go on, and talk aloud, and eagerly ; use vehement action, and only remember your terms, and you are safe. Let the matter go where it will ; you have many will do so. But at first be very solemn and grave, like your garments, though you loose yourselves after, and skip out like a brace of jugglers on a table. Here he comes ! set your faces, and look superciliously, while I present you.

(Re-enter Dauphine with Morose.)

Mor. Are these the two learned men ?

True. Yes, sir ; please you salute them.

Mor. Salute them ! I had rather do anything than wear out time so unfruitfully, sir. I wonder how these common forms, as "God save you," and "You are welcome," are come to be a habit in our lives ; or, "I am glad to see you !" when I cannot see what the profit can be of these words, so long as it is no whit better with him whose affairs are sad and grievous, that he hears this salutation.

True. 'Tis true, sir ; we'll go to the matter then.— Gentlemen, master doctor, and master parson, I have acquainted you sufficiently with the business for which you are come hither ; and you are not now to inform yourselves in the state of the question, I know. This is the gentleman who expects your resolution, and therefore, when you please, begin.

Ott. Please you, master doctor.

Cut. Please you, good master parson.

Ott. I would hear the canon-law speak first.

Cut. It must give place to positive divinity, sir.

Mor. Nay, good gentlemen, do not throw me into circumstances. Let your comforts arrive quickly at me, those that are. Be swift in affording me my peace, if so I shall hope any. I love not your disputation, or your court-tumults. And that it be not strange to you, I will tell you: My father, in my education, was wont to advise me, that I should always collect and contain my mind, not suffering it to flow loosely; that I shliould look to what things were necessary to the carriage of my life, and what not; embracing the one and eschewing the other; in short, that I should endear myself to rest, and avoid turmoi: which now is grown to be another nature to me. So that I come not to your public pleadings, or your places of noise; not that I neglect those things that make for the dignity of the commonwealth; but for the mere avoiding of clamours, and impertinences of orators, that know not how to be silent. And for the cause of noise, am I now a suitor to you. You do not know in what a misery I have been exercised this day, what a torrent of evil! my very house turns round with the tumult! I dwell in a wind-mill: the perpetual motion is here, and not at Eltham.

True. Well, good master doctor, will you break the ice? master parson will wade after.

Cut. Sir, though unworthy, and the weaker, I will presume.

Ott. 'Tis no presumption, *domine* doctor.

Mor. Yet again!

Cut. Your question is, For how many causes a man may have *divortium legitimum*, a lawful divorce? First you must understand the nature of the word divorce, & *diverlend*—

Mor. No excursions upon words, good doctor; to the question briefly.

Cut. I answer then, the canon-law affords divorce but

in few cases : But there are *duodecim impedimenta*, twelve impediments, as we call them, all which do not *dirimere contractum*, but *irritum reddere matrimonium*, as we say in the canon-law, not take away the bond, but cause a nullity therein.

Mor. I understood you before ; good sir, avoid your impertinency of translation.

Ott. He cannot open this too much, sir, by your favour.

Mor. Yet more !

True. O, you must give the learned men leave, sir.— To your impediments master doctor.

Cut. The first is *impedimentum erroris*.

Ott. Of which there are several species.

Cut. Ay, as *error personæ*. 1.

Ott. If you contract yourself to one person, thinking her another.

Cut. Then, *error fortunæ*.

Ott. If she be a beggar, and you thought her rich.

Cut. Then, *error qualitatis*.

Ott. If she prove stubborn or headstrong, that you thought obedient.

Mor. How ! is that, sir, a lawful impediment ? One at once, I pray you, gentlemen.

Ott. Ay, before marriage, but not after marriage, sir.

Cut. Master parson says right. *Nec post nuptiarum benedictionem*. It doth indeed but *irrita reddere sponsalia*, annul the contract ; after marriage it is of no obstanty.

True. Alas, sir, what a hope are we fallen from by this time ! "

Cut. The next is *conditio* ; if you thought her free-born, and she prove a bond-woman, there is impediment of estate and condition.

Ott. Ay, but master doctor, those servitudes are *sublatæ* now among us Christians.

Cut. By your favour, master parson——

Ott. You shall give me leave, master doctor.

Mor. Nay, gentlemen, quarrel not in that question ; it concerns not my case ; pass to the third.

Cut. Well then, the third is *votum* : if either party have made a vow of chastity. But that practice, as master parson said of the other, is taken away among us, thanks be to discipline. The fourth is *cognatio* ; if the persons be of kin within the degrees.

Ott. Ay ; do you know what the degrees are, sir ?

Mor. No, nor I care not, sir ; they offer me no comfort in the question, I am sure.

Cut. But there is a branch of this impediment may, which is *cognatio spiritualis* ; if you were her godfather, sir, then the marriage is void.

Ott. That comment is absurd, and superstitious, master doctor ; I cannot endure it. Are we not all brothers and sisters, and as much akin in that, as godfathers and goddaughters ?

Mor. O me ! To end the controversy, I never was a godfather, I never was a godfather in my life, sir. Pass to the next.

Cut. The fifth is *crimen adulterii* ; the known case. The sixth, *cultus disparitas*, difference of religion. Have you ever examined her, what religion she is of ?

Mor. No ! I would rather she were of none, than be put to the trouble of it.

Ott. You may have it done for you, sir.

Mor. By no means, good sir ; on to the rest ; shall you ever come to an end, think you ?

True. Yes, he has done half, sir. On to the rest—be patient, and expect, sir.

Cut. Theseventh is, *vis*, if it were upon compulsion or force.

Mor. O, no ; it was too voluntary, mine ; too voluntary.

Cut. The eighth is, *ordo* ; if ever she have taken holy orders.

Ott. That's superstitious too.

Mor. No matter, master parson ; would she would go into a nunnery yet.

Cut. The ninth is, *ligamen*; if you were bound, sir, to any other before.

Mor. I thrust myself too soon into these fetters.

Cut. The tenth is, *publica honestas*; which is *inchoata quædam affinitas*.

Ott. Ay, or *affinitas orta ex sponsalibus*; and is but *leve impedimentum*.

Mor. I feel no air of comfort blowing to me, in all this.

* * * *

Ott. Absurd, absurd, absurd, and merely apostatical.

Cut. You shall pardon me, master parson, I can prove it.

Ott. You can prove a will, master doctor; you can prove nothing else. Does not the verse of your own canon say: *Hæc socianda vetant connubia, facta retractant?*

Cut. I grant you: but how do they *retractare*, master parson?

Ott. In *aeternum*, sir.

Cut. That's false in divinity, by your favour.

Ott. 'Tis false in humanity to say so.

Mor. O mine ears!

Ott. She may have *libellum divorpii* against you.

Cut. Ay, *divorpii libellum* she will sure have.

Mor. Good echoes forbear.

Ott. If you confess it—

Cut. Which I would do, sir—

Mor. I will do anything.

Ott. And clear myself in *foro conscientiæ*—

(*Epicene rushes in, followed by Haughty, Centaire, Mavis, Mistress Otter, Daw and La-Foole.*)

Epi. I will not endure it any longer. Ladies, I beseech you help me. This is such a wrong as never was offered to poor bride before; upon her marriage-day to have her husband conspire against her, and a couple of mercenary companions to be brought in for form's sake, to persuade a separation! If you had blood or virtue in you, gentle-

men, you would not suffer such earwigs about a husband, or scorpions to creep between man and wife.

Mor. O, the variety and changes of my torment !

Hau. Let them be cudgelled out of doors by our grooms.

Cen. I'll lend you my footman.

Mav. We'll have our men blanket them in the hall.

Daw. Content, i' faith.

True. Stay, ladies and gentlemen ; you'll hear before you proceed ?

Mav. I'd have the bridegroom blanketed too.

Cen. Begin with him first.

Hau. Yes, by my troth.

Mor. O mankind generation !

Dauph. Ladies, for my sake forbear.

Hau. Yes, for Sir Dauphine's sake.

Cen. He shall command us.

La-F. He is as fine a gentleman of his inches, madam, as any is about the town, and wears as good colours when he lists.

[*Moroſe conſiders various poſſible reaſons for diſorce. Twice Truewit raiſes his hōpes, but each time Otter and Cutbeard diſcover a legal flaw.*]

Mor. O my heart ! wilt thou break ? wilt thou break ? This is worst of all worst worsts that hell could have devised ! Marry this woman, and so much noise !

Dauph. Come, I see now plain confederacy in this doctor and this parson to abuse a gentleman. You study his affliction. I pray be gone, companions. And, gentlemen, I begin to suspect you for having parts with them—Sir, will it please you hear me ?

Mor. O do not talk to me ; take not from me the pleasure of dying in silence, nephew.

Dauph. "Sir, I must speak to you. I have been long your poor despised kinsman, and many a hard thought has strengthened you against me ; but now it shall appear if either I love you or your peace, and prefer them to all the

world beside. I will not be long or grievous to you, sir. If I free you of this unhappy match absolutely, and instantly, after all this trouble, and almost in your despair, now——

Mor. It cannot be.

Dauph. Sir, that you be never troubled with a murmur of it more, what shall I hope for or deserve of you?

Mor. O, what thou wilt nephew! thou shalt deserve me, and have me.

Dauph. Shall I have your favour perfect to me, and love hereafter?

Mor. That, and anything beside. Make thine own conditions. My whole estate is thine: manage it; I will become thy ward.

Dauph. Nay, sir, I will not be so unreasonable.

Epi. Will Sir Dauphine be mine enemy too?

Dauph. You know I have been long a suitor to you, uncle, that out of your estate, which is fifteen hundred a year, you would allow me but five hundred during life, and assure the rest upon me after; to which I have often, by myself and friends, tendered you a writing to sign, which you would never consent or incline to. If you please but to effect it now——

Mor. Thou shalt have it, nephew: I will do it, and more.

Dauph. If I quit you not presently, and for ever, of this cumber, you shall have power instantly, afore all these, to revoke your act, and I will become whose slave you will give me to, for ever.

Mor. Where is the writing? I will seal to it, that, or to a blank, and write thine own conditions.

Epi. O me, most unfortunate, wretched gentlewoman!

Han. Will Sir Dauphine do this?

Epi. Good sir, have some compassion on me.

Mor. O my nephew knows you, belike; away, crocodile!

Cen. He does it not sure without good ground.

Dauph. Here, sir. [Gives him the parchments.

Mor. Come, nephew, give me the pen; I will subscribe

to anything, and seal to what thou wilt for my deliverancce. Thou art my restorer. Here, I deliver it thee as my deed. If there be a word in it lacking, or writ with false orthography, I protest before heaven, I will not take the advantage.

[*Returns the writings.*]

Dauph. Then here is your release, sir. [Takes off *Epicæne's peruke and other disguises.*] You have married a boy, a gentleman's son, that I have brought up this half year at my great charges, and for this composition, which I have now made with you. What say you master doctor? "This is justum impedimentum, I hope, error personæ.

Ott. Yes, sir, in *primo gradu.*

Dauph. I thank you, good doctor Cutbeard, and parson Otter. [Pulls their false beards and gowns off.] You are beholden to them, sir, that have taken this pains for you ; and my friend, Master Truewit, who enabled them for the business. Now you may go in and rest ; be as private as you will, sir. [Exit Morose.] I'll not trouble you till you trouble me with your funeral, which I care not how soon it come.—Cutbeard, I'll make your lease good. "Thank me not, but with your leg, Cutbeard." And Tom Otter, your princess shall be reconciled to you—How now, gentlemen, do you look at me ?

Cler. A boy !

Dauph. Yes, Mistress Epicæne.

True. Well, Dauphine, you have lurched your friends of the better half of the garland, by concealing this part of the plot : but much good do it thee, thou descrv'st it, lad. Madams, you are mute, upon this new metamorphosis. Let it not trouble you, that you have discovered any mysteries to this young gentleman. We'll all undertake for his secrecy, that can speak so well of his silence. [Coming forward.] Spectators, if you like this comedy, rise cheerfully, and now Morose is gone in, clap your hands. It may be that noise will cure him, at least please him. [Exeunt.]

THE END.

QUESTIONS

A

- 1 What is the object of Dauphine's plot? Does it succeed?
- 2 What part does Truewit play in the Silent Woman? Is he well named?
- 3 How does Cutbeard help to carry out Dauphine's plan?
- 4 Do you think that the writer has kept Epicene's secret well? Try to recollect some of the devices which prevent even Clermont and Truewit from discovering it.
- 5 At what point in the play does the *dénouement*, or unravelling of the plot take place? What are the advantages and disadvantages of choosing this moment?
- 6 Dauphine says to Truewit, "Ay, you have many plots" Name as many as you can.
- 7 Give an account of the character of Mistress Otter. What is the attitude of her husband towards her? Of other people?
- 8 To what extent does Morose deserve the tricks played upon him?
- 9 Does Dauphine differ at all from his companions, or do you find all three much the same?
- 10 Which of Captain Otter's cups do you imagine to have been the largest?
- 11 Give as full an account as possible of Sir Amorous, and try to imagine his costume and appearance.
- 12 Does Otter show himself in the early part of the play, capable of playing his part in the last act? Does Cutbeard?
- 13 Are the good or bad qualities of men uppermost in this play?
- 14 What is the most ridiculous side of Morose's hatred of all voices but his own?
- 15 What is the cause of the supposed quarrel between Daw and La-Foole?
- 16 Is Dauphine's estimate of Truewit's character correct when he says "His frank nature is not for secrets"?
- 17 Who is triumphant at the end of the play? Does he make a good hero and do you rejoice in his victory? Why?
- 18 Why does Truewit pretend that the plan for fooling Daw and La Foole is Dauphine's invention?
- 19 Why is Dauphine angry when Truewit tries to prevent Morose's marriage?
- 20 Does Dauphine's lot reflect credit on his wit? on his heart?

B

- 1 Would you imagine that the author of this play was—(a) a learned man? (b) A sympathetic man? Why?
- 2 In what ways is this comedy true or untrue to life?
- 3 It must have been very difficult to gather all the characters

into Morose's house for the whole of the second half of the play, and to account reasonably for their presence there. Has Jonson accomplished this successfully? Was it necessary for the complete success of the play?

*4 Do you feel affection for any of the characters in this play? Whom do you admire, and whom despise? Does this suggest anything about Jonson's attitude toward men and women?

*5 Do you think that Jonson was ever deeply or passionately in love? Why?

*6 Jenson wrote his comedies according to a theory of character. Can you discover it from this play?

7 Which is easier to divide the *dramatis personæ* into good and bad, or witty and foolish?

8. "Nothing so true as what you once let fall,
" Most women have no characters at all"—Pope

What do you think Jonson's opinion of this couplet would be?

9 Do you find certain scenes slow and tedious? Which? Is this due to witty dialogue we can no longer appreciate, or is it real dullness, a weakness in the play?

10 What light do the names throw on the characters? Does this help you to answer question 6? Are Jonson's men and women easy or difficult to understand?

11 How is the silence of the Silent Woman emphasised?

12 Is the song, "Still to be neat, still to be drest," peculiarly suited to the play or not?

13 Would you imagine Ben Jonson to have been a lover of the country?

14 Is he more attracted to the poor and simple, or the rich, fashionable, and accomplished?

15 How do you first receive your impressions of La-Fool, Daw, Captain Otter? Does this strengthen or weaken the impression you receive when the character enters?

*16 What use does the dramatist make of climaxes? The construction of Act III, Sc 2, has received very high praise. Can you see why?

17 Would it be easy or difficult to discover in what period *Epicoene* was written from reading it?

18 Would you be surprised to hear that *Bartholomew Fair*, one of Jonson's plays, was written to ridicule the Puritans? Why?

19 Which characters does Jonson most carefully distinguish, his men or his women?

20 Do you consider the plot against Morose too unkind to be truly comic?

C

1 Can you explain what Dryden meant when he said of Ben Jonson, "I admire him, but I love Shakespeare"?

2 Do you agree with Dryden's praise of this play in his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*? What are the qualities he most admires?¹

*3 Jonson has been praised by certain critics for observing the three unities. Show how he observes (a) The Unity of Plot or Action (b) The Unity of Time (c) The Unity of Place. Compare any play of Shakespeare's from this point of view. Consider the advantages of taking a single day in a man's life, for the subject of a play, instead of a large part, or even the whole of his life.

4 Which do you find more amusing—the scenes provided by Captain Otter, or those where Daw and La Foole are made ridiculous? Did Jonson hold your opinion? Which scenes remind you more of Shakespeare?

5 Does Morose ever become a tragic figure? Does Shylock in the Merchant of Venice? What difference is there in the feelings you have for the two characters? Does Jonson intend you to sympathise with Morose? Does Shakespeare intend you to sympathise with Shylock?

6 Compare the women in this play with those in any play of Shakespeare.

7 Would you consider the comedies of Sheridan to bear a greater resemblance to Shakespeare or to Ben Jonson?²

8 Do you learn more or less about London and England in Jonson's day from *Epicane* than from other plays of the same period?³

9 Examine the following list of characters, and say how many you think Jonson could have created Hamlet, Beatrice, Pistol, Falstaff, Shylock, Bottom, Polonius, Ophelia, Lady Macbeth

10 Can you find any side of dramatic art in which Jonson was Shakespeare's equal or superior?

11 Have you formed any opinion of Jonson's prose style? Examine some of the speeches. Look for clearness and vigour, balance and contrast, picturesqueness and variety.

12 Compare Shakespeare and Jonson in their power of portraying—

(a) The dress, speech, manners and amusements of men of their own day

(b) The inner nature and deeper thoughts and feelings of men and women, as they appear in all ages

13 Can you imagine Ben Jonson writing—(a) Romeo and Juliet? (b) She 'toops to Conquer'? Why?⁴

14 Pepys saw this play acted six or seven times at least. Can you discover his opinion of it from his diary?⁵

15 Can you account for the fact that it was more popular than any play of Shakespeare's at this time?⁶

16 Can you also account for the fact that Shakespeare is so well known now, and Jonson almost forgotten? Reconcile this answer with No. 15

17 "Comedy is the fountain of sound sense"—"The test of

comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter," wrote Meredith. How does *Epicœne* satisfy these conditions ? *

18. Jonson wrote two tragedies. What subjects did he choose, and how did he treat them ? Would you expect them to be greater than his comedies ?

19. Have you found any mention of Ben Jonson in Milton's poems ? How is he spoken of ? *

20. Jonson said of Shakespeare, "The players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing, he never blotted a line. My answer hath been, would he had blotted a thousand." What difference does this criticism suggest between the two dramatists ? It was he too who said of Shakespeare, "Thou hadst small Latin and less Greek"—"He was not of an age, but for all time." Discuss these comments ? *, *.

21. How would this play have been judged in Addison's day ? *

NOTES

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I. *Pretenders*—Candidates for membership of the College.

Act I

2. *argument*—subject. *an—if*.
3. *Puppy*, etc.—horses' names.
4. *discover*—reveal.
5. *servants*—lovers.
6. *to lie in*—to live in. *bearward*—bear leader.
6. *trunk*—speaking-tube.
9. *Decameron*—Boccaccio's great collection of stories.
- II. *terrible boys*—the fashionable, roystering gallants of the town.
- II. *rich china-woman*—the products of China were considered great rarities and the china houses were very fashionable resorts.
12. *the island voyage, or at Cadiz*—two famous expeditions, one under Drake, the other under Essex and Raleigh.
12. *she shall*—Epicœne shall.

Act II

13. *makes a leg*—makes an obeisance by drawing back one leg.
14. *Harpocrates*—god of silence.
15. *obnoxious*—liable.
16. *preciso*—Puritanical.
16. *silenced brelñren*—non-conforming ministers forbidden to preach.
16. *wood*—collection, crowd.
17. *conjurer*—sorcerer, fortune-teller.

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17. *lies . . . new face*—i.e. to get a fresh complexion.
 17. *fucus*—preparation for the complexion.
 17. *let her . . . charges*—i.e. Epiccēne will be the loser if she refuses the invitation.
 20. *Syntagma*—systematic treatise.
 20. *extraordinary*—not regularly but on special occasions.
 28. *presently*—at once.
 29. *his charge*—Epiccēne.
 29. *silenced ministers*—because a puritan, forbidden to preach, would be far from silent.

ACT III

32. *Bank Side*—the south or Surrey side of the Thames, where several of the theatres and also the Bear-Garden were.
 33. *exhibition*—allowance.
 34. *what . . . vicar ?*—what sort of a vicar is he?
 35. *shift me*—change my clothes.
 36. *property*—dupe. *given you the dor*—made a fool of you.
 37. *sewer*—waiter.
 38. *noise*—band.
 38. *pestling*—pounding with a pestle, overwhelming.
 40. *mult*—punish by a fine.
 42. *left-handed*—unlucky.
 46. *bride-alc*—marriage-feast. *biggen*—baby's cap.
 47. *transform*—i.e. into stone.
 48. *'Tis my place*—evidently Mavis tries to go through the door first.
 48. *heralds*—to decide the right order of precedence.

ACT IV

49. *go away*—die.
 49. *curious*—careful.
 50. *scald*—ill-shaped, foul.
 50. *Medca*—the enchantress of Greek legend.
 50. *Foreman*—an impostor of Jonson's day who had dealings with spirits.
 51. *Fear no cousins*—“fear no colours” was the usual saying. Cf. Falstaff in the last scene of II. Henry IV.
 54. *Mary Ambree*—a famous woman soldier who fought at the siege of Ghent.
 55. *Faith, mistress, you must do so too*—addressed to Epiccēne.
 56. *target*—a shield struck behind the scenes in order to represent the sound of a cannon.

58. *conduit-pipe*—pipe connected with a fountain.
 59. *A Groat's-worth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance* was a book written by Green, the dramatist, just before his death in which he expressed regret for a much spent life. *The Sick Man's Salve* is another book.
 60. *set . . . nick*—beat at cards, perhaps cheat.
 61. *cast*—pair. *kestrels*—inferior variety of hawk.
 64. *possession*—a man taking legal possession of another's house had to be well armed.
 67. *pctard*—bomb.
 70. *at the blunt*—with the flat of a sword.
 70. *hoodwinked*—blindfolded.
 71. *gules*—red (in heraldry).
 72. *brake*—a framework for holding restless horses still.
 74. *begged*—by a courtier after it had been forfeited to the crown on account of the riot.

ACT V

78. *Eltham*—where there was a famous puppet-show or motion
 82. *mankind*—a term of reproach, especially applied to
 woman, evil.
 84. *composition*—agreement.
 84. *discovered*—revealed.

LIST OF BOOKS SUGGESTED

The figures refer to those placed *after* the questions headed "C."

- 1 Shakespeare's Plays.
 2 Jonson's Plays.
 3 Gregory Smith : Ben Jonson (*English Men of Letters*).
 4 Herford and Simpson : Ben Jonson. *The Man and His Work*.
 1 Dryden : Essay of Dramatic Poesy.
 2 Sheridan : Plays.
 3 Plays of Chapman, Dekker, Heywood, Middleton, etc.
 4 Goldsmith : She Stoops to Conquer (*The Socrates Booklets*).
 5 Pepys : Diary.
 6 Meredith : Essay on Comedy.
 7 Milton : L'Allegro.
 8 Jonson : To the Memory of my Beloved Master William Shakespear.
 9 Jonson : Discoveries.
 10 Addison : Essay on Sir Timothy Tittle (*The Socrates Booklets*).

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

